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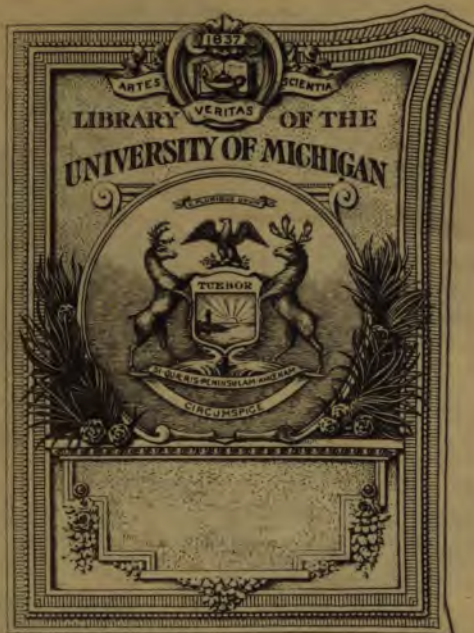
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# RATIONALIST ENGLISH EDUCATORS

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*"For I think it every Man's indispensable Duty, to do all the Service he can to his Country; and I see not what Difference he puts between himself and his Cattle, who lives without that Thought."*

JOHN LOCKE to EDWARD CLARKE, of Chipley, Esq.



65-6-29-59

Rhetoric  
Seth,  
2-5-29  
18708

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## PREFACE

THE History of Education is, at last, recognised tentatively as a "subject," though, in some high quarters, even this distinction is allowed to it with misgiving and half-hearted dubiety. And yet it is, really and quite obviously, a chapter in the History of Human Thought, though it is still too unworked a chapter to have been otherwise than inadequately appreciated. Scraps of it lurk in unsuspected remote corners; some details are covered over by the deep-lying dust of the ages, or are lost beneath the recorded trivialities of social life. In the few years which have elapsed since the idea of its possible utility to intending teachers dawned, a considerable number of forgotten educational writers have been unearthed; but so far, unavoidably, their work has been rather described than appraised. An apparently unending panorama of thinkers, differing sometimes considerably, and sometimes—as if to make confusion worse confounded—only very slightly, has been unrolled before the surprised eyes of that complacent world, which had decided long ago, *a priori*, off-hand, that education, at any rate, might be left safely to the time-honoured process of "muddling through."

It seems sometimes as if Englishmen must be pre-eminent in the art of promulgating and practising a multitude of diverse and sometimes mutually destructive plans simultaneously. They have followed their common practice

in the region of education : " as many men, so many plans " might almost be the motto of the generations of efforts, since the landing of St. Augustine at Thanet.

In the earlier ages of the nation's existence, education was rooted obviously in its religious life, it was in the hands of the clergy. Alfred, in his often-quoted preface to St. Gregory's *Cura Pastoralis*, reminding his countrymen of former days, writes : " The sacred orders, how zealous they were both in teaching and learning, and in all the services they owed to God, and how foreigners came to this island in search of wisdom." And again, he wrote : " I saw before it had been all ravaged and burnt, how the churches throughout the whole of England stood filled with treasures and books, and there was also a great multitude of God's servants, but they had very little knowledge of the books, for they could not understand anything of them, because they were not written in their own language." \*

" Filled with treasures and books," even if the bulk of the nation could not read them. The reflective person must be amazed sometimes at the extraordinary vitality of the *Ecclesia Anglicana*. Endowed, by the labours and munificence of great priests and scholars, its treasures were destroyed, a few years after Alcuin exchanged York for Paris, by the ignorant iconoclasm of the Northmen. Having, through centuries of pious care and generosity, recovered, it suffered pillage again at the hands of the servants of Henry VIII. and Edward VI., when the Scores of old English music, utterly irrecoverable, Missals, Breviaries and MSS. were destroyed ruthlessly ; and the contents of great libraries were sold to foreign book-binders, and even to English tradesmen, who used them, in lieu of the usual " grey paper," for the wrapping of their beggarly wares.

When John Leland had finished what he had described

\* *Pastoral Care*. Early English Tract Society, vol. i. p. 4.

as the "Laborious Journey and Serche of Johan Leylande for Englandes Antiquities," he wrote an account of it, and presented it, under the title of a *Newe Yeares Gyfte* to Henry VIII., in the 27th year of that King's reign. When, in 1549, John Bale printed the said *New Year's Gift*, he prefixed to it the following lament: "Never had we beene offended for the losse of our lybraryes, beynge so many in nombre, and in so desolate places for the more parte, yf the chiefe monumentes and moste notable workes of our excellent wryters had bene reserved. If there had bene in every shyre of Englande but one solempne lybrary, to the preservacyon of those noble workes and preferment of good languages in our posteryte, it had bene yet somewhat. But to destroy all without consideracyon is and wyll be unto Englande for ever, a moste horryble infamy amonge the grave senyours of other nacyons. . . . Yea, what maye brynge our realme to more shame and rebuke than to have it noysed abroade that we are despyers of lernynge."

When once more the Church's losses by robbery had been replenished by fresh gifts from Her faithful children, then rough iconoclasm destroyed buildings and other ecclesiastical treasures during the period of the Puritan ascendancy. It seems not impossible that the accumulation of ecclesiastical treasures may, on some not remote day, excite again the unprincipled cupidity of the rapacious. Strange vitality indeed, alike of self-sacrificing generosity and clumsy spoliation. However much violence the Church may have suffered, education, while it remained in her hands, was based on religious principles. As the ancient devotion of the nation, so conspicuous, *e.g.* in much of the theological and mystical literature of the fourteenth century which has come down to us, passed gradually into the modern attitude, the connexion between religion and

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education loosened palpably. Writers on the latter put forth excellent schemes; but often, they were a trifle hand-to-mouth, were, in the incomparable jargon of to-day, practical rather than theoretical, dealing with details rather than with fundamentals.

The thread of continuity, furnished by an underlying principle, viz. that all education should be designed, in Bacon's great phrase, "for the glory of God and the relief of man's estate," was gradually lost, and we seem to find little trace of our origins in such a writer as John Locke. Not that he was irreligious; in his cold and stiff fashion, he was most respectably the opposite. But his emphatic rationalism was shot through and penetrated with that blighting spirit of the eighteenth century, which chilled our poetry, starched our prose, and filled so many Cathedrals, Continental as well as English, with indescribable monstrosities of pulpit, reredos and statue; turned Westminster Abbey into a lumber room for monumental horrors, and even removed from the sanctuary of Chartres some of her incomparable glass—"la folle splendeur de ses vitres"—lest the appalling modern reredos should be insufficiently visible.

As the religious glow faded out of English life, one ideal remained; and it is partly for the sake of this, still conspicuous in him, that it has seemed worth while to pick out from the roll of pedagogic writers this one man, John Locke; and partly because he, the earliest of English Psychologists, bases his system of education on definitely philosophical principles.

If he fail to awake such religious fervour as Alfred or St. Dunstan might have awakened, at least he clings fast to that ideal which may be found in the greatest of our educators from Alfred to J. S. Mill and Matthew Arnold, viz. that it is education's business to make citizens,

to fit the individual for his inevitable responsibilities. This is not the least important aspect of the past for a generation like our own, bent so widely, so intently on material pleasure, and the seizure of its "rights."

Though, on this side, Locke comes to us as one of a consentient band of witnesses, his distinguishing mark is his obvious belief that education is not a fortuitous game, nor an amiable fad reposing on airy nothing, but, to win success, must be an art, something to be done; lying squarely and truly on reasoned principle, *i.e.* on science, something to be known, viz. on history, ethics, psychology and political science.

It seemed foolish, however, to pick him out and then leave him with no estimate of the results which he produced; for produced is the right word. Without him, the Edgeworths could hardly have been just as they were, and J. S. Mill himself must have been otherwise. The distinguishing mark of them all is the fact that differ though they might, they agreed in basing Education upon Philosophy; they agreed too in the exaltation of ~~that~~ part of man's nature which we commonly call Reason.

That this logical outcome of Locke's "Sensational Philosophy" is only one part of the whole truth is obvious enough: that it is a part justifies, nay, even demands its fair recognition.

If any one asks why this educational philosophy should have been garnered so laboriously by a student whose main interest lies in opposed philosophical views, one answer might be found in the general perversity of things. A truer explanation, one would fain hope, might lurk in the possibility of the existence, even in this unpromising world, of a toleration something more than nominal.

That so large a portion of this book consists of quotations will be no offence to the reader who grasps its purpose,

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which is to bring Locke and Mill once more before the modern mind. They were both alike voluminous writers ; the present generation has not only lost the taste, but apparently lacks the time for reading continuously and at length. It is true that scholars can only be fashioned out of those who will do the work for themselves. But apart from those, who at the portals of the teaching profession desire honestly to acquire some knowledge of their predecessors' views on education, there remains that great mass of persons to whom the mechanical power to read has been given nowadays : it seems a pity that it should not be utilised on something more fruitful, more edifying than the ephemeral journalism of half educated writers. And so, perhaps, those who still value wisdom, may strip off the unessential core and present the kernel, themselves only supplying that humble dish which may avail to win acceptance for the so desirable fruit of another's growing ; and so doing, may even goad some into reading further and thinking harder for themselves.

GERALDINE E. HODGSON.

# RATIONALIST ENGLISH EDUCATORS

## CHAPTER I

### LOCKE'S IMMEDIATE PREDECESSORS

"All true criticism of philosophic doctrine, as of every other product of the human mind, must begin with an historic estimate of the conditions antecedent and contemporary, which helped to make it what it was."

*Plato and Platonism*, ch. vi.

PROPERLY speaking, Locke belongs to the seventeenth century. Yet he has much more affinity with Addison, Berkeley, and Pope, than with Hobbes, on the one hand, Crashaw on the other, and with Milton connecting the last two though with an intervening link which cannot, by any ingenuity, bind. Undoubtedly, his views of political science, and, to some extent, of ethics may be lineally traced to Thomas Hobbes, a matter to be handled in a subsequent chapter. But Locke's general attitude and spirit are not of the seventeenth century. He lacks the outspoken definiteness of Milton, *e.g.* in the *Areopagitica*, that courageous rushing on the foe born of the irrevocable choice of a passionate belief. Locke and passion, how widely sundered they are : he has no touch, moreover, of Herbert's calm serenity, of the pathetic wistfulness of Vaughan, of Crashaw's fiery faith.

Reasonableness, the patient dialectic of a Cultivated Man, has superseded the combined passion and pathos of the age of the Civil War. Between Lancelot Andrewes and John Locke, for example, what an unbridgeable chasm : between "the piercing and rapid energy of Andrewes' devotions," and Locke's chilly plea for the existence of God, what a gap.

As a matter of fact Locke was born in 1632, only six years after Andrewes' death.

Andrewes was not a solitary phoenix. It is perhaps an interesting study in the diversity of contemporary thought to compare the first rough sketch, for some *Thoughts on Toleration*, written in 1667, which has been found in Locke's Common Place Book, with the well-known passage from *A Replication to the Bishop of Chalcedon*, by John Bramhall, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate, which was written just eleven years before. Locke writes as follows :—

" But to show the danger of establishing uniformity, to give a full prospect of this subject, there remains yet the following particulars to be handled :

" 1st. To show what influence Toleration is like to have upon the number and industry of your people.

" 2nd. What force must compel all to an Uniformity in England ; to consider what party alone, or what parties are likeliest to unite, to make a force able to compel the rest.

" 3rd. To show that all that speak against Toleration, seem to suppose that severity and force are the only arts of government, and way to suppress any faction, which is a mistake.

" 4th. That for the most part the matters of controversy and distinction between sects are no parts, or very inconsiderable ones, and but appendages of true religion.

" 5th. To consider how it comes to pass that the Christian religion has made more factions, wars, and



disturbances in civil societies than any other, and whether Toleration and Latitudinism would not prevent those evils.

" 6th. The making the terms of church communion as large as may be, *i.e.* that your articles in speculative opinion be few and large, and ceremonies in worship few and easy, which is Latitudinism.

" 7th. That the desiring and undertaking to prove several doctrines which are confessed to be incomprehensible, and to be no otherwise known but by revelation, and requiring men to assent to them in the forms proposed by the doctors of your several churches, must needs make a great many Atheists.

" But of these when I have more leisure. Sic cogitavit J. Locke, 1667.\* Let us pass from these curious jottings with their odd, suppressed premise that expediency, not truth, should rule in religious matters—an opinion which some of Locke's countrymen have, since his day, reproduced under a rare variety of forms—to Bramhall's sober yet deeply-felt declaration :

" No man can justly blame me for honouring my spiritual mother, the Church of England, in whose womb I was conceived, at whose breasts I was nourished, in whose bosom I hope to die. Bees by their instinct of nature do love their hives, and birds their nests. But God is my witness that I, according to my uttermost talent and poor understanding, have endeavoured to set down the naked truth impartially, without either favour or prejudice, the two capital enemies of right judgment. . . . My desire hath been to have Truth for my chiefest friend, and no enemy but error. If I have had any bias, it hath been desire of peace, which our common Saviour hath left as a legacy to His Church, that I might live to see the reunion of Christendom, for which I shall always bow the knee of

\* Lord King's *Life of Locke*, vol. i. pp. 289-291 (New Edition, 1830):

my heart to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . Howsoever it be, I submit myself and my poor endeavours, first to the judgment of the Catholic Œcumenical essential Church, which, if some of late days have endeavoured to hiss out of the school, I cannot help it. From the beginning, it was not so. And if I should mistake the right Catholic Church out of human frailty, or ignorance (which for my part, I have no reason in the world to suspect ; yet it is not impossible, when the Romanists themselves are divided into five or six several opinions what this Catholic Church, or what their Infallible Judge is), I do implicitly, and in the preparation of my mind, submit myself to the True Catholic Church, the Spouse of Christ, the Mother of the Saints, the Pillar of Truth. And seeing my adherence is firmer to the Infallible Rule of Faith, *i.e.* the Holy Scriptures interpreted by the Catholic Church, than to mine own private judgment and opinions, although I should unwittingly fall into an error, yet this cordial submission is an implicit retractation thereof, and I am confident will be so accepted by the Father of Mercies, both from me and from all others who seriously and sincerely do seek after peace and truth.

"Likewise I submit myself to the Representative Church, that is, to a free General Council, or so General as can be procured ; and until then to the Church of England, wherein I was baptized, or to a National English synod. To the determination of all which, and of each of them respectively, according to the distinct degree of their authority, I yield a *conformity and compliance*, or at the least, and to the lowest of them, an *acquiescence*." \*

Whether we think of the poets or the divines of the seventeenth century, whether we recall the haunting melody

\* *A Replication to the Bishop of Chalcedon*, 1656, by John Bramhall, D.D., Archbishop of Armagh.

of George Herbert's *Sacrifice*, the infinite pathos of Vaughan's *Thou Who knowest for whom I mourn*, or the tense emotion of Crashaw's

" O thou undaunted daughter of desires,  
By all thy dower of lights and fires ;  
By all the eagle in thee, all the dove,  
By all thy lives and deaths of love ;"

whether we linger over Bramhall's stately defence,\* or plead for life and breath and all things in the Catholic pages of Lancelot Andrewes' *Preces Privatae* ; whether we calm our passion with the devout resignation of Milton's *Sonnet on his blindness*, or, sadder task, labour through the " coarse satirical power " of the Latin Secretary's polemics, there is one trait common to all these men of the seventeenth century ; if they could have joined in no other chorus, at least they could have proclaimed in unison—*porro unum est necessarium*. Above all things, they cared for religion ; for that they lived, and would, had necessity arisen, have died, as Laud did.

Locke belonged to their century, but not to them. Not Puritan, nor Roman, nor English Catholic among them could have written those strangely apathetic detached notes of his for an Essay " when leisure should permit," though some after him might have penned them.

If the eighteenth century could be taxed justly with showing any really odious characteristic, surely it would be intellectual arrogance, self-complacency, self-satisfaction. It succeeded in persuading itself that men are very fine fellows, and that human intelligence, pure, unaided, unqualified, unbuttressed human reason is an instrument of vast worth. Such a conception as Ruysbroeck's, that " every ascent has humility for its condition and law," was entirely outside its mental scope, beyond its farthest grasp.

\* *A Replication to the Bishop of Chalcædon*, 1656, by John Bramhall, D.D., Archbishop of Armagh.

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However, our immediate task is not with poets and divines, but with Locke's English predecessors in the sphere of pedagogic theory : we shall only find one of note in the seventeenth century, Milton with his *Tractate on Education*. For the others, we must go back to the sixteenth century, which, considering all things, and in comparison with other periods, must be pronounced rather rich in this region of literature. We find Elyot's *Governour* in 1531, Ascham's *Scolemaster* in 1570, and from Mulcaster's pen *The Positions* in 1581, the *Elementaris* in 1582. The question arises : " Was Locke acquainted with any of these books ? " Mr. Quick, in his edition of *Thoughts concerning Education*, seems to take it for granted that Locke had read no books on the subject, save Montaigne's *Essays*. He does not appear to wonder as to what and how much the philosopher may have owed to the classics, to the *Republic* and to the *Laus* of Plato, to the *Ethics* and *Politics* of Aristotle, to the opening chapters of Quintilian's *Institutes of Oratory*. Mr. Quick writes : " We cannot but regret that from his ignorance of Ascham, Mulcaster, Brinsly, and Hoole among English writers, and, among the Continental writers, of Comenius, who in those days was the great authority with educational reformers, many notions of things escaped our philosopher which his reason would doubtless have made use of had they come into his mind." \*

That Locke was acquainted with Montaigne we could guess by reading his *Thoughts concerning Education* : we know it otherwise, viz. from an extract which Lord King cuts out of his " Journal " : " Feb. 14th. Montaigne, by a gentle kind of negligence, clothed in a peculiar sort of good language, persuades without reason ; his essays are a texture of strong sayings, sentences, and ends of verses which he so puts together that they have an extraordinary force

\* *Thoughts concerning Education*, C. U. P. p. xlix.

upon men's minds. He reasons not, but diverts himself, and pleases others ; full of pride and vanity." \*

"He reasons not," a damning phrase from the pen of a rationalist ; "full of pride and vanity," a mood in which Montaigne could hardly equal some of the sons of the eighteenth century. Can it represent Locke's real view when he had acquainted himself thoroughly with the "dazzling mosaic of the Essays ?"

If it did, Vauvenargues avenged his countryman, though probably unconsciously, when he wrote his not less hasty criticism : "Locke était un grand philosophe, mais abstrait, ou diffus, et quelquefois obscur. Son chapitre *de la Puissance* est plein de ténèbres, de contradictions, et moins propre à faire connaître la vérité qu' à confondre nos idées sur cette matière." †

Nevertheless, Vauvenargues repaired later this injustice to the great thinker, to whom he owed some debt, when he wrote : "Si Locke eût rendu vivement, en peu de pages, les sages vérités de ses écrits, ils n'auraient pas osé le compter parmi les philosophes de son temps ;" ‡ so convinced was this lucid stylist, that metaphysicians, to win admiration, must be longwinded.

Whether or no Locke had read other educational writers besides Montaigne, it is in Elizabeth's reign that we shall find the one Englishman, who can, without hopeless presumption, challenge comparison with him. The general character of her reign was, of course, decided by the trend of foreign affairs, and the struggles of religious parties at home. To protect the country against armed foreign aggression, and to rescue the Church in England from utter destruction, were the Queen's principal achievements.

\* *Life of Locke*, Lord King, vol. i. p. 296.

† *Réflexions et Maximes*, Oeuvres de Vauvenargues, 338.

‡ *Ibid.* 280.

On the whole, hers was not a reign marked by economic plans, although the First Poor Law was the work of one of her Parliaments. Neither, apparently, was education a question of prime interest to the nation, and that, in spite of the wreckage by Henry VIII. and Edward VI., and of the pathetic pleadings of Latimer: "To consider what hath been plucked from abbeyes, colléges, and chantries, it is marvel no more to be bestowed upon this holy office of salvation. It may well be said by us that the Lord complaineth by His prophet, *Domus mea deserta, vos festinatis unusquisque in domum suam*. What is Christ's house, but Christian souls? But who maketh any provision for them? Every man scrapeth and getteth together for this bodily house, but the soul-health is neglected. Schools are not maintained; scholars have not exhibition; the preaching office decayeth. Men provide lands and riches for their children, but this most necessary office they for the most part neglect. Very few there be that help poor scholars; that set their children to school to learn the word of God, and to make a provision for the age to come." \*

Only thirteen years later, there occurred at the luncheon table of "Mr. Secretarie Cecil," that conversation about the beating of Eton scholars, which issued eventually in the publication of Ascham's *Scolemaster* in 1570, two years after its author's death. If we may judge from this book, education was not, even at Eton, in a satisfactory state: things had not improved much since Latimer's description of the nation's plight after the plundering of the monastic houses. We may recall, in corroboration, Sir William Cecil's remark at that historic lunch when, as Ascham says, he "took occasion to wish that some more discretion were in many schoolmasters in using correction than

\* Sermon at Stamford Bridge, November 9, 1550.

commonly there is. Who many times punish rather the weakness of nature than the fault of the scholar, whereby many scholars, that might else prove well, be driven to hate learning before they know what learning meaneth: and so are made willing to forsake their book and be glad to be put to any other kind of learning." \*

Then, further on in the book, comes that damaging description of the ill-directed foresight of parents which Ascham has sent down to us: "If a father have four sons, three fair and well-formed mind and body, the fourth wretched, lame, and deformed, his choice shall be to put the worst to learning, as one good enough to become a scholar. I have spent the most part of my life in the university, and, therefore, I can bear good witness that many fathers commonly do thus."

The truth of the assertion is vouched for in the closing sentence. Those who reside at the ancient universities have good opportunity of judging the nation's schools, and the ways of parents.

Apparently, in Elizabeth's reign, the nation was not obsessed with the problems of education; certainly the writers did not fix their attention on the niceties of pedagogy. Perhaps it was enough for them to develop the Drama, and to fill the land with matchless lyrics.

Yet the closing years of her reign produced the one English writer on education, who may, without undue damage to himself, venture to try conclusions even with Locke, the long neglected but sagacious Richard Mulcaster.

This man, until Mr. Quick exhumed him, was little known to his countrymen, though an eighteenth century editor of Ascham's *Scolemaster*, James Upton, not only mentioned him, but even quoted a page and a half from his writings. To-day, it is coming to be the fashion to adulate him. The

\* The *Scolemaster*, Roger Ascham.

aim of the present chapter is not to summarise his theory—his own book is at the service of all who can read English ; —but to indicate the precise nature of the philosophic basis upon which he grounded his suggestions. The special points of interest, so far as philosophy is concerned, are the following. First, that Mulcaster urged the value of experience plus experiment. He puts these in the very forefront of his book, *The Positions* :

"I have taught in publike without interrupting my course, now two and twentie yeares, and haue alwaie had a very great charge vnder my hand, which how I haue discharged, they can best iudge of me, which will iudge without me. During which time, both by that which I haue seene in teaching so long, and by that which I haue tryed, in training vp so many, I do well perceiue, upon such ettes, as both myself am subiect vnto, and other teachers no lesse than I, that neither I haue don so much as I mighte, neither any of them so much as they could. Which lettes me thinke I haue both learned what they be, and withall conceiued the meane how to get them remoued. Wherby both I and all other maie do much more good than either I or anie other heretofore haue don." \*

Now here, clearly, is a reformer in education who is aware of four facts—that there are *hindrances* in education, that these are to be diagnosed by experience, "which I haue seene in teaching so long ;" that the proper means for their removal are to be discovered by experiment, "by that which I haue tryed in training vp so many ;" and lastly, that upon such diagnosis and discovery the improvement of future education must rest.

The next point is that he realised that some comprehension of the way in which human minds work is essential to

\* Richard Mulcaster, *The Positions* (edited by R. H. Quick), ch. i. p. 2.



the teacher. It is quite true that he defers consideration of it to the fifth chapter. He perceives what is indeed so obvious that the neglect of it is as remarkable as it is frequent, that the mind (or "soule" as he calls it) and body are inextricably interdependent: "the soule to conceiue and comprehend, what is best for itselfe and the bodie to : The bodie to waite, and attend the commandment and necessities of the soule : " \* and he pleads for such training as shall preserve the due equilibrium of these two partners in life.

It is soon apparent that Mulcaster's psychology is that of the intuitionist school: "For there be both in the body and the soule of man, certaine ingenerate abilities." And these, he maintains, it is the business of parents and teachers to develop: "For there be both in the body and the soule of man, certaine ingenerate abilities, which the wisdom of parentes and reason of teachers, perceiuing in their infancie, and by good direction auancing them further, during these young yeares, cause them proue in their ripenesse very good and profitable, both to the parties which haue them, and to their countries which use them." †

Mulcaster disclaims all intention of setting forth an entire philosophy of Man, his purpose is psychological rather than metaphysical, to use words whose signification is more scientifically precise now than when he wrote: "Yet meane I not to make any anatomie, or resolution of the soule his parties and properties, a discourse not belonging to this so low a purpose, but only to pick out some natural inclinations in the soule, which as they seeme to craue helpe of education and nurture, so by education and nurture, they do proue very profitable, both in private and publike." ‡

\* *The Positions*, ch. v. p. 25.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.* p. 27.

## 24 RATIONALIST ENGLISH EDUCATORS

These "inclinations in the soule" Mulcaster declares to be three :—

(i.) "A capacity to perceiue that which is taught them, and to imitate the foregoer."

(ii.) "As a quickenes to take, so a fastnesse to retaine ; therefor their memorie would streight way be furnished with the verie best, seeing it is a treasurie." \*

(iii.) "An ability to discern what is good, and what is ill, which ought foorthwith to be made acquainted with the best, by obedience and order, and dissuaded from the worse, by misliking and frowne." †

This may seem to our modern psychologists and psychophysicists but a poor and meagre stock-in-trade : let them remember that the English are not naturally a philosophical nation, and that everything must have a beginning.

The last point of distinguishing interest in Mulcaster was foreshadowed by phrases in the fifth chapter ; "profitable to the parties which have them, and to their countries which use them ;" and again "profitable both in private and publike : " but he does not work out his vein of thought, till he comes to chapters xxxvi. and xxxvii., possibly the most original in the whole book. For here, he deals with an economic problem, 195 years before the appearance of the *Wealth of Nations*, by which, so Mr. Stopford Brooke once wrote, Adam Smith "created the science of Political Economy." Not only in Psychology, but in Economics, too, was the Head Master of Merchant Taylors a sagacious and far-seeing pioneer. Had his countrymen attended, not only English Education, but English Social Problems, might be widely different to-day.

\* Cf. Fénelon :—"One should choose so carefully the impression to be engraved therein" (a child's memory) ; "into so tiny, so precious a treasury, one should pour none but the most exquisite things" (*De l'Éducation des Filles*).

† *The Positions*, ch. v. p. 27.

Mulcaster regarded the nation as a whole, education as a national concern, an integral, non-negligible factor in national welfare, and proceeded to investigate the right principles which should govern that which modern economists have called the division of labour. A general statement is, as a rule, risky ; so I will only venture to say that Mulcaster is the earliest English writer known to me who proclaims definitely the economic doctrine of demand and supply as it relates to trades and professions. Nor did he approach the problem haphazard, he saw that he was treating of a general principle, although he chose to confine himself to one aspect of it: "though the pestering of members do overlaie the moste professions and parts of any common weal, and harme there where it doth so overcharge, yet I will not medle with any, but this of learning and the learner, which I have chosen to be my peculiar subiect." \*

And then he urges that in a healthy State, the number of scholars should neither exceed nor fall short of that which the community can utilise: "Whereof I say this, that to many learned be to burdenous, that to few be to bare, that wittes well sorted be most civill, that the same misplaced be most vnquiet and seditious." †

In a terse passage, quaintly phrased, but expressive with his peculiar picturesqueness, he pictures the dismal condition of a state overburdened with learned: "For the ‡ rowmes which are to be supplied by learning being within number, if they that are to supply them, grow on beyond number, how can yt be but to great a burden for any State to beare? To have so many gaping for preferment, as no goulfe hath store enough to suffice, and to let them rome helpless, whom nothing else can helpe, how can

\* *Positions*, ch. xxxvi. p. 135.

‡ i.e. rooms, places.

† *Ibid.* p. 135.

it be but that such shifters must nedes shake the verie strongest piller in that state where they liue, and loyter without living? which needeles superfluitie fleeting without seat, what ill can it but breede?" \*

Mulcaster's economic acumen does not stop here. Not only must the number of workers of different sorts be governed, in a healthy state, by the laws of demand and supply, but also, he pleads, by a psychological law, by natural inclination resting on ability, or in one single word, by "bent:" "Wittes *well sorted* be most civill." †

Again his language is picturesquely convincing: "If that wit fall to preach, which were fitter for the plough, and he to clime a pulpit, which is made to scale a walle, is not a good *carter* ill-lost, and a good *souldier* ill-placed? If he will needes lawe it, which careth for no lawe, and professe *iustice* that professeth no *right*, hath not *right* an ill caruer, and *iustice* a worse *maister*? If he will deale with *physicke* whose braines can not beare the infinite circumstances which belong thereunto, whether to maintaine health, or to restore it, doth he anything else, but seeke to hasten death, for helping the disease? to make way to murther, in steede of amendment? to be a *butchar's prentice* for a *maister in physike*? And so it is in all kindes of life, in all trades of liuing, where fitnes and right placing of wittes doth work agreement and ease, vnfitnes and misplacing haue the contrarie companions, disagreement and disease." ‡

Mulcaster published these suggestions in 1581. Now, in the beginning of the twentieth century, we are making tentative efforts to connect the Boards of Trade and of Education, and to furnish those immediately responsible for education with statistics of trades and professions. In a paper read to the North of England Education Conference

\* *Postitions*, ch. xxxvi. p. 135.

† *Ibid.* p. 137.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 138.

on January 7th, 1911, Mr. R. Williams (Divisional Office of the Manchester Board of Trade) said: "This Juvenile Labour Exchange needs to be permeated to a very large extent by educational interests. Though boys and girls need the Labour Exchange as much as adults do, they need the Labour Exchange plus something else. The reason is this, although when they have left school they are workers in the Labour Market, they must also be regarded for some years as children, and as such still in need of further education. Again, whereas adults have more or less different trades, and know what work to ask for, boys and girls are very largely indeterminate—they can within limits be made into almost anything, and in the majority of cases they do not know what they can do the best. This is particularly important in order that they may be encouraged to ask for employment, not with a mere view to present earnings, but with a view to their future careers."

Here, obviously, is Mulcaster's principle of "sorting wittes."

When Mr. Williams stated that "boys and girls are very largely indeterminate," he may seem to traverse Mulcaster's pleading for the recognition of "bent." But all pedagogic principles are liable to qualification; also Mr. Williams did actually qualify in the phrase, "they can *within limits* be made into almost anything." Some children, probably not the majority, show marked tendencies to do this, that, or the other work. Barring calamities, they will probably achieve it. But the vaguer inclinations of less strongly individual children would, in all probability, alter slightly according to information concerning the chances actually offered then and there by different occupations. Thus, a child who hated confinement in a town might not care greatly what kind of agricultural work he did. Another, with a bent for chemistry, might be willing to

utilise his knowledge by applying it to manufacture if he were told that there were at the time fewer scholastic than industrial vacancies.

Perhaps we may do well to learn from Mulcaster one further truth, viz. that the business on which we have embarked so tardily, is highly complex, one for which we are but scantily equipped. Certainty can hardly be ours, much groping will be at any rate our early portion in this matter; so Mulcaster thought, for he saw the truth irrevocably associated with the great name of Butler—a man to whom perhaps this rather dour Cumbrian Head Master bears some remote resemblance—and he announced it almost in the great Bishop of Durham's words, uttered so many years later:

"God hath reserved his calling and discovering houres, as all other future eventes, to his owne peculiar and private knowledge: probabilities be our guides, and our coniectures be great, though not without exception." \*

In chapter xxxvii. Mulcaster deals with the question of the best means of equating the supply of and demand for "labour." He is not in favour of legislation, Englishmen were not anxious to suffer restraint in the spacious times of great Elizabeth; he would rely mainly upon parental necessity, and upon choice or "bent": "two speciall groundes are to be considered which strip away excessive number, *necessitie* and *choice*." † As for the first, he describes it tersely: "You would have your child learned, but your purse will not stretch, your remedy is patience." ‡

But he was a careful thinker, prone to observe and analyse facts before he promulgated principles and theories. No doubt through the driving of some hard experience at Merchant Taylors School he realised that a parent's purse

\* *Positions*, ch. xxxvi. p. 141.

† *Ibid.* ch. xxxvii. p. 143.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 143.

and a child's fitness to be bred a scholar do not always match: he provides for that when he says "in cases of necessarie *restraint* I could wish provision were had to some singular wittes, found worthy the auancement: either by private patronage, or by publike." \*

Private patrons, like Sir Thomas More's and Ascham's, no less than ecclesiastical charity, had lately fallen short of the national needs, as Latimer had so pathetically indicated.

It is not a little interesting to us, watching the struggles of Labour Boards for the young, to realise that though Mulcaster did not propose to rely on legislation, yet that he regarded this problem of "sorting wits" as a national one: he speaks of such care as "A thing not new-faingled, but euer in use, where the common weale had an eye to distribute their multitude to the best and easiest proportion of their owne state: which otherwise improporionate would breade an *aposteme*." †

It is not my purpose here, to follow Mulcaster through his general pedagogical recommendations; it is rather to indicate those portions of his work which would enable us, when we turn to Locke, to remember that he was not the first philosophical educator whom England produced. If space permitted, it would be easy to show that in details, as *e.g.* in the training of teachers, Mulcaster dealt with matters which Locke passed over, matters still awaiting treatment: but the point of interest is, that in the question of the necessity for principles the sixteenth century forestalled even the philosophical eighteenth. Mulcaster saw as clearly as Locke, as distinctly as the most modern of us, that education, to succeed, must base itself on philosophical principles; and succeeds most quickly if it does this consciously and avowedly.

\* *Positions*, ch. xxxvii. p. 145.

† *Ibid.* p. 146.

## CHAPTER II

### OUTLINE OF LOCKE'S LIFE

**J**OHN LOCKE was born at Wrington, in North Somersetshire, in the autumn of 1632. His early boyhood was passed probably at Pensford, a little village near Bristol, where his parents had settled. His father, also John, twenty-six years old when the philosopher was born, practised as a country attorney, although he enjoyed the convenience of a fortune, inherited from his forbears, the Lockes of Charton Court, Dorsetshire. Unfortunately, this patrimony suffered during the Civil War, so that the philosopher was at one time anxious for his father's personal comfort, and after the elder Locke's death, succeeded to a depleted inheritance.

When Locke was in his cradle England was distracted by storms and strife. In 1660, he wrote, "I no sooner perceived myself in the world, but I found myself in a storm which has lasted almost hitherto." All through his boyish days that storm continued; when he was eight, Laud was impeached, when he was nine, Strafford was executed. To a child even of tender years such persons, such events must have had some significance.

The Commons' Commission for the defacement of images, altars and ornaments may not have affected him greatly at the age of nine, but possibly the later recollection of these things, driven home by much subsequent party



legislation, had some influence upon his mature and strongly expressed views upon toleration.

Certainly, when he was ten, he must have understood the importance of the erection of Charles' Royal Standard at Nottingham, enforced by his father's public assent, in the Parish Church at Publow, to the Long Parliament's *Grand Remonstrance*; an announcement rendered still more practical and real to a child, when a few weeks later his father accepted a Captaincy of Horse in a volunteer regiment on the Parliamentary side. Once more, public affairs must have been forced on his attention, when, in 1643, Rupert, having defeated Waller at Devizes, sacked Bristol. A boy of eleven could scarcely regard with equanimity the violent attack on a city less than seven miles from his own house.

Possibly Laud's execution may not have impressed him as it would have done had his family been royalist in sympathy; yet one can hardly believe that a boy could remain wholly unmoved by the murder of the Primate of England.

In 1646, Locke entered at Westminster School, and we may well speculate on the feelings of the public schoolboy of seventeen, when, three years later, hard by his school premises and playground, his King, on that chill January morning, walked out to the scaffold in Whitehall and laid down his life.

All the great educators, one after another, lay stress on the important principle that "the beginning is the chief matter," that the early years are those of impressionableness, of malleability. Locke himself, writing upon education, is no less insistent than the rest upon this point.

What then was the effect upon him of all these events? It is hard to say. He wrote letters when he was a boy, and they have not come down to us. As we contemplate

his somewhat chilly attitude, it is possible to guess that perhaps he gained his regard for moderation as a kind of studied, cultivated, deliberate reaction against the violence in high places and in high matters, presented to his sensitive, formative years. In 1651, the date at which Locke matriculated at Oxford, the English beat the Dutch at sea in May, while, in November, Van Tromp beat Blake off Dover. The country was more accustomed then than now to war close to its own shores, so possibly the absorbing new life of an undergraduate enabled Locke to triumph over any disquiet he might otherwise have felt. He seems to have accepted with corresponding placidity Oliver Cromwell as Chancellor of the University, and Dr. Owen, an Independent of moderate views, as Dean of his own College, Christ Church.

Mr. Tyrrell, grandson of Archbishop Usher of Armagh, who was intimate with Locke at Christ Church, relates that the freshman was "distinguished for his talents and learning among his fellow-students." Locke's account of himself is that he lost much time at Oxford. His biographer, Lord King, indulged in strange depreciation of the studies of the University, speaking of "the false philosophy of the schools, and their vain disputation," which perhaps means no more than that Lord King differed from Oxford philosophy.

As his early years and his school days were passed amid storms, so was Locke's time as an undergraduate. In 1653, there came from Barebone's Parliament the strange proposal to suppress the Universities, and apply their wealth, so Clarendon put it, "for the public service and to ease the people from the payment of taxes and contributions." Possibly such troubles sat lightly upon him. If it be true as many hold, that the formative as well as the enjoyable element of academic life is to be found by

under-graduates very largely in the society of their peers, the salutary coinciding for once with the pleasant, Locke must have enjoyed happy advantages, for Le Clerc tells us that "his very early friends and companions" (*i.e.* at Oxford), "were selected from amongst the lively and agreeable, rather than the learned of his time;" and that "the correspondence with which he frequently amused himself with them had a resemblance in style and expression to the French of Voiture, although, perhaps not so finished and refined as the French author."

Locke took his B.A. degree in 1655 or 1656, his M.A. in 1658, the year of Cromwell's death. In 1660, John Locke the elder died, and the young philosopher inherited a moderate fortune.

Chance, if there be such a force, seems partly to have directed Locke's choice of a profession. At Oxford, he studied medicine for a time; he was offered preferment if he would take Holy Orders, a course which he, to his credit, declined on the score of defect of vocation. He did not express it exactly so, such a phrase would have fallen oddly from his lips. His inability was the reason he offered, however he worded his refusal. Eventually he embarked on a political career. His first introduction to public affairs, that momentous instant in any one's life, seems to have occurred in 1664, when he accompanied Sir Walter Vane, Charles II.'s Envoy to the Elector of Brandenburg, as Vane's Secretary.

Two of Locke's letters, written during this mission, exist still, dated Cleve. One is a political, the other a friendly epistle, the latter containing sundry jests at the expense of Roman Catholic Services he had attended, jests in strangely bad taste; though at the close of the letter he had the candour to acknowledge that of the Romanists he had conceived "other thoughts than when I was in a

place that is filled with prejudices, and things are only known by hearsay ; " and he adds :—" I have not met with any so good-natured people, or so civil, as the Catholic priests : and I have received many courtesies from them, which I shall always gratefully acknowledge."

His gibes at a " young sucking Calvinist divine," and at a Lutheran sermon which he could not understand owing to his ignorance of High Dutch, are in no better taste. These things, taken with the other remarks, remind us of the unfortunate airs which English people have not yet learned not to assume over religious matters when they are dealing with foreigners ; and they certainly prompt the question—when will people who talk much of toleration (as Locke himself did), realise that it might mean a firm and tenacious grip of one's own principles combined with a respectful patience with other people's ?

In 1665, Locke returned to England ; and the King offered him, even urged upon him, other political missions. All of these he refused, and finally entered the service of Lord Ashley, afterwards Earl of Shaftesbury. Locke became the Earl's most trusted adviser, the tutor of his children. Indeed, like Rousseau for Émile, Locke chose the younger Ashley's wife for him ; concerning which it is interesting to remember his advice about a tutor. " In this choice, be as curious as you would be in that of a Wife for him ; for you must not think of Trial or Changing afterwards." \*

Through Shaftesbury's influence, Locke held some public offices, which ill-health, eventually necessitating residence in France, compelled him to resign in 1673. He went to France for a time in 1675.

In 1682, the state of political feeling compelled Shaftesbury's flight from England, and about the end of August

\* *Thoughts concerning Education*, § 92.

in the following year, Locke followed him to Holland. The intervening months he had spent at Christ Church. Prideaux, one of his College co-temporaries, wrote from thence on October 24, 1682, "John Locke lives very quietly with us, and not a word ever drops from his mouth that discovers anything of the heart within. Now his master is fled, I suppose we shall have him here altogether. He seems to be a man of very good converse."

Whether or no Shaftesbury had any hand in the partisan legislation which banished Roman priests and prevented Roman Catholic worship, it seems quite certain that Locke had none. Yet, he deemed it discreet to keep his famous letters on toleration in manuscript, a prudence which did not avail to protect him; for in 1684, Locke being then in Holland, Charles II., through the medium of Sunderland, demanded and obtained his formal expulsion from Christ Church. The royal document is still in the College Library. He was expelled on November 16 1684, and was never reinstated.

After the death of Charles II., in 1685, Locke's name was included in a list of eighty-four persons, "traitors and plotters against the life of James II.," which was sent to the Dutch Government. Locke prudently remained *perdu* in Holland. Though his friends asked for a pardon for him, he, characteristically enough, protested that he "had no occasion for a pardon, having committed no crime." However, it was forthcoming in 1686, and thenceforth he was free to go where he would. He used his leisure in Holland, for the composition of the *Essay on the Human Understanding*, and the *Thoughts concerning Education*.

He attracted the notice of William of Orange and Mary, and when they were invited to occupy the throne of England, Locke returned to his own country in their train. William

offered him the post of ambassador to Prussia, and then to Vienna, both of which he declined.

He spent the last fifteen years of his life, in philosophic ease, in the midst of peace, so long delayed, mostly at Oates, about five miles from Chipping Ongar in Essex, the home of his friends, Sir Francis and Lady Masham. It is, again, a characteristic sign of that dignity which marked Locke in every relation of life, and is a great element in his abiding charm, that he insisted on contributing his share to the expenses of the establishment, so that he might be entirely at his ease among them.

He died on October 27, 1704.

As we think of Locke's long life, witnessing as it did, the Civil War ; the execution of Charles I. ; the Protectorate ; the Restoration, with all that it meant, not only in the triumph of sober-minded people, but in the excesses of the less reasonable, incited first by the intolerable tyranny of the Puritans and then by their escape from it, to parade extreme views ; the miserable reign of James II. ; the Revolution with the re-instatement of rigidity ; and the uninspiring accession of Anne, as we consider all these events, we cannot but be struck with Locke's almost unique opportunities as an educator. Who else ever beheld so constantly shifting a scene within the limits of a single life ?

As a spectator of the dismal excesses to which animosity over religion may and sometimes does lead men of widely differing creeds, it was not unnatural that he came to see the charm of a "perfect uncontrollable liberty . . . provided always that it be all done sincerely and out of conscience to God."

In one other respect, too, Locke was singularly fortunate. The limitations of *doctrinaire*, arm-chair politics, thoughts and precepts are acknowledged everywhere. Every philosopher gains if he can become, at least for a time, a "man

of affairs," can have his hand on the actual ropes which control human life. Locke, owing to his connexion with Shaftesbury, came into touch with the government of the country ; and yet he was neither so intimately involved nor so naturally one-sided as to develop into an unreflecting partisan.

## CHAPTER III

### LOCKE AS A MAN

"All true criticism of philosophic doctrine, as of every other product of human mind, must begin with an historic estimate of the conditions, antecedent and contemporary, which helped to make it precisely what it was. But a complete criticism does not end there. In the evolution of abstract doctrine as we find it written in the history of philosophy, if there is always on one side, the fatal, irresistible, mechanic play of circumstance—the circumstances of a particular age which may be analysed and explained; there is always also, as if acting from the opposite side, the inexplicable force of a personality, resistant to, while it is moulded by, them."

*Plato and Platonism*, ch. vi.

"I HAVE often thought that our state here in this world, is a state of mediocrity, which is not capable of extremes, though on one side there may be great excellency of perfection." \*

These words, conjectured to belong to the draft of a letter to Thomas Herbert (afterwards Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery), to whom the *Essay on the Human Understanding* was dedicated, are perhaps as characteristic of Locke, of his general outlook and judgment upon human life as any one short sentence could possibly be. In these few words, we find the cold breath of that desiccating moderation which so often, as we are reading him, checks our impulses, and drags our desires down from the skies to the dust of earth. Then oddly combined with it, too, is his recurring insistence upon the other side of the matter,

\* King's *Life of John Locke*, vol. i. p. 210.



viz. that limited capacity is no possible justification of supine ineffectiveness. It is one of his favourite themes, this :—

“ This man presumes upon his parts, that they will not fail him at time of need, and so thinks it superfluous labour to make any provision beforehand. . . . On the other side, there are others that depress their own minds, despond at the first difficulty, and conclude that the getting an insight in any of the sciences, or making any progress in knowledge, farther than serves their ordinary business, is above their capacities. These sit still because they think they have not legs to go, as the others last mentioned do, because they think they have wings to fly, and can soar aloft when they please.” \*

Speaking more generally too, he wrote, “ Our bodies and our minds are neither of them capable of continual study, and if we take not a just measure of our strength, in endeavouring to do a great deal, we shall do nothing at all.” †

In the valuable little fragment on *Study*, embedded in that Journal which he kept sedulously during his sojourn in France, he observes :—“ We are here in the state of mediocrity ; finite creatures, furnished with powers and faculties very well fitted to some purposes, but very disproportionate to the vast and unlimited extent of things.”

So does he delight to dilute with moral cold water the wine of life. One human quality perhaps escaped more or less this general condemnation. It is well known that Locke never wearied of urging the value of human reason ; he has been thought over-insistent on the point : “ Nobody knows what strength of parts he has, until he has tried them. And of the understanding one may most truly

\* *Conduct of the Understanding*, §§ 38, 39.

† *Life of John Locke*, by Lord King, vol. i. p. 133.

say, that its force is greater generally than it thinks, until it is put to it. *Viresque acquirit eundo.*

"And therefore the proper remedy here is but to set the mind to work, and apply the thoughts vigorously to the business; for it holds in the struggles of the mind as in those of war. *Dum putant se vincere victré*, a persuasion that we shall overcome any difficulties that we meet with in the sciences, seldom fails to carry us through them. Nobody knows the strength of his mind, and the force of steady and regular application until he has tried. This is certain, he that sets out upon weak legs, will not only go farther, but grow stronger too, than one with a vigorous constitution, and firm limbs, who only sits still." \*

Locke belittles often the sphere of feeling, and not seldom that of will. Indeed, in a measure, he regards will as a disturbing factor in reasonable life: to his fragment *Of knowledge, its extent and measure*, he prefixes the quotation *Quod volumus facile credimus*. While he thus minimises feeling and will, reason he regards as man's sheet-anchor. "I do not," he writes, in the same Essay, "say this to undervalue the light we receive from others, or to think there are not those who assist us mightily in our endeavours after knowledge; perhaps without books we should be as ignorant as the Indians whose minds are as ill-clad as their bodies: but I think it is an idle and useless thing to make it one's business to study what have been other men's sentiments, in things where reason is only to be judge, on purpose to be furnished with them, and to be able to cite them on all occasions."

One is not quite sure what are "the things where reason only is to be judge." But, if we take them to cover, *e.g.* questions of government and morals, then while one would gladly admit the valuelessness of other men's senti-

\* *Conduct of the Understanding*, § 39.

ments, merely as furniture or as matter for quotation, one would not admit it from the point of view of consensus of judgment. Locke hardly seems to give enough place to the qualifying and sometimes enlarging effects on individual judgment of the sentiments of mankind, or even of a weighty section of it. It is quite true that he admits that books may be useful, though simultaneously he declares that they are often studied from mere vanity: but the whole trend of the passage is an exaltation of that individualised use of reason, which leads him, a little further on, to write—

“I can no more know anything by another man’s understanding than I can see by another man’s eyes. So much I know, so much truth I have got, so far I am in the right as I do really know myself; whatever other men have, it is in their possession, it belongs not to me, nor can be communicated to me but by making me alike knowing; it is a treasure that cannot be lent or made over.” \*

It is astonishing that Locke should have argued as if a man cannot “see by another man’s eyes.” Suppose an entomologist shows an ordinary person two butterflies, one conforming to type, the other a rare variety; points out the usual marking of the one, the omissions, additions, or alterations of the other; then the ordinary person, for all practical purposes does see with the other man’s eyes; observing in both cases what he never would have perceived had he been left to himself.

It is, of course, true that one man cannot take out his neighbour’s eyes and plant them in his own head; but there are countless things which one man sees and can point out to another, which that other would never have noticed without the activity of his friend’s busy eyes. Just the same is true of the relation of one man’s understanding to another’s. Poverty stricken wretches most of us would

\* Lord King’s *Life of Locke*, vol. i. p. 196.

be, were we really and truly left to see with our own eyes, and perceive with our own understandings.

Locke is curiously certain of the value of understanding. In the *Conduct of the Understanding* he wrote: "The faculty of reasoning seldom or never deceives those who trust to it." \* Still more clearly he wrote: "Every man carries about him a touchstone, if he will make use of it, to distinguish substantial gold from superficial glittering, truth from appearances. And indeed the use and benefit of this touchstone, which is material reason, is spoiled and lost only by assumed prejudices, overweening presumption, and narrowing our minds" † Surely Wordsworth came nearer to the essential truth of things when he wrote, "Nature never did betray the heart that loved her." The heart that loved! Yet, mingled with this strange exaltation of human reason, we find another mood in Locke (and his two contrary attitudes remind us of his great successor, J. S. Mill), impelling him as he thinks of common men's opinions about things in general, to write these scathing words: "If they happen to be false, as in most men the greatest part must necessarily be:" ‡ and, still more depressingly, as he discusses right action, and our responsibility for it:—"It is almost impossible to know which is that one best, there being so many actions which may all have some peculiar and considerable goodness, which we are at the same time capable of doing, and so many nice circumstances and considerations to be weighed one against another, before we can come to make any judgment which is best, and after all are in great danger to be mistaken: the comparison of those actions that stand in competition together, with all their grounds, motives, and consequences as they lie before us, being very

\* *Conduct of the Understanding*, § 3.

† *Ibid.* § 3.

‡ *Of Study.* King's *Life of Locke*, vol. i. p. 190.

hard to be made ; and what makes the difficulty yet far greater is, that a great many of those which are of moment, and should come into the reckoning always escape us ; our short sight never penetrating far enough into any action to discover all that is comparatively good or bad in it, or the extent of our thoughts to reach all the actions which at any one time we are capable of doing ; so that at last, when we come to choose which is best, in making our judgment upon wrong and scanty measures, we cannot secure ourselves from being in the wrong : this is so evident in all the consultations of mankind, that should you select any number of the best and wisest men you could think of, to deliberate in almost any case what were best to be done, you should find them make almost all different propositions, wherein one (if one) only lighting on what is best, all the rest acting by the best of their skill and caution, would have been sinners, as missing of that one best. The Apostles themselves were not always of one mind." \*

Had Locke been as practised a theologian as he was a philosopher, he might have avoided this dismal confusion of intellectual misapprehension and moral obliquity, but then he would not have scored his point. For the subtle reader can hardly fail to notice a faint subterranean note of satisfaction with this irremovable defectibility which Locke postulates as characteristic of human nature.

Perhaps to this chill estimate of human powers, his unheroic view of man's *end* may be ascribed ; the view which he expresses, for instance, in such a passage as this : " So that, if we will consider man as in the world, and that his mind and faculties are given him for any use, we must necessarily conclude it must be to procure him the happiness which this world is capable of ; which certainly is nothing else but plenty of all sorts of those things which

\* Draft of a letter to Mr. Herbert, on *Scruples*, vol. i. p. 207.

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can with most ease, pleasure, and variety, preserve him longest in it ; " \* or in this : " Another use of his knowledge is to live in peace with his fellow-men, and this also he is capable of." † The " proper subjects " of human study are decided by this rather tepid idea of our goal. " That which seems to me to be suited to the end of man, and lie level to his understanding, is the improvement of natural experiments for the conveniences of this life, and the way of ordering himself so as to attain happiness in the other, *i.e.* moral philosophy, which in my sense comprehends religion too, or a man's whole duty [but *vid.* this alibi "]. ‡

When we do look " alibi," we certainly discover that Locke makes provision for an aim beyond securing mundane comfort and social peace, but this further performance is not much less drab than the earlier : " It is certain, and that all men must consent to, that there is a possibility of another state when this scene is over ; and that the happiness and misery of that depends on the ordering of ourselves in our actions in this time of our probation here. The acknowledgment of a God will easily lead any one to this, and § he hath left so many footsteps of himself, so many proofs of his being in every creature, as are sufficient to convince any one who will but make use of their faculties that way,—and I dare say nobody escapes this conviction for want of sight ; but if any be so blind, it is only because they will not open their eyes and see ; and those only doubt of a Supreme Ruler and an universal law, who would willingly be under no law, accountable to no judge ; those only question another life hereafter, who intend to lead

\* *Knowledge, its Extent and Measure.* King's *Life of Locke*, vol. i. p. 164.

† *Ibid.* p. 166.

‡ *Study.* *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 198.

§ It is significant that Locke does not use capitals for He and His, and Who and Whose when he writes of God. In other quotations I have altered this.

such a one here as they fear to have examined, and would be liable to answer for when it is over." \* Apart from the scandalous intolerance of the passage, which quietly cuts out the possibility of honest doubt, an intolerance which the Author of the "Letters on Toleration" generally reserves for "Papists," it is interesting as an example of Locke's view of the disturbing influence of "Will." It has a further interest. Though it is possible to imagine that a really stupid person might "choose to doubt" the reality of a future life in order to enjoy himself in his own way here, without even perceiving that his device, if it proved wrong, did not obviate the consequences, it is at least strange that so philosophic a person as Locke should have described such ostrich-like behaviour, without so much as suggesting its futility.

But though he tells us that "the next thing to happiness in the other world, is a quiet and prosperous passage through this, which requires a discreet conduct, and management of ourselves in the several occurrences of our lives. The study of prudence then seems to me to deserve the second place in our thoughts and studies;" † yet his hold on this greatest happiness is dubious and tentative, resting more on the will which he distrusts elsewhere, than on the understanding which he loves to exalt. "It being then possible, and at least probable, that there is another life wherein we shall give an account of our past actions in this to the great God of heaven and earth, here comes in another, and that the main concernment of mankind, to know what those actions are that he is to do, what those are he is to avoid; what the law is he is to live by here, and shall be judged by hereafter; and in this part too he is not left so in the dark, but that he is furnished with principles of

\* *Knowledge, its Extent and Measure. Life of Locke*, vol. i. p. 167.

† *Ibid.*

knowledge and faculties able to discover light enough to guide him ; his understanding seldom fails him in this part, unless when his will would have it so. If he take a wrong course, it is most commonly because he goes wilfully out of the way, or, at least, chooses to be bewildered ; and there are few, if any, who dreadfully mistake, that are willing to be in the right ; and I think one may safely say that amidst the great ignorance which is so justly complained of amongst mankind, where any one endeavoured to know his duty sincerely, with a design to do it, scarce ever any one miscarried for want of knowledge." \*

Here, again, Locke seems to confuse intellectual error with moral obliquity ; but perhaps about all this part of his writing there is a certain deference to conventional expectation. Had he taken as much trouble here to clear his mind of prejudice as he did in some other spheres of thought, he might have arrived at full understanding of that principle after which he seems to grope, that no man is a heretic against his will. It must not be forgotten that sometimes he wrote more definitely, *e.g.* " In what I have said, I am far from denying that God can, or doth, sometimes enlighten men's minds in the apprehending of certain truths, or excite them to good actions by the immediate influence and assistance of the Holy Spirit, without any extraordinary signs accompanying it. But in such cases too, we have reason and Scripture, unerring rules to know whether it be from God or no. When the truth embraced is consonant to the revelation in the written word of God, or the action conformable to the dictates of right reason, or holy writ, we may be assured that we ran no risk in entertaining it as such." † In this passage Locke glides easily over such puzzles as who shall decide what are the

\* *Knowledge, its Extent and Measure. Life of Locke*, vol. i. pp. 167, 168.

† *Essay on the Human Understanding*, iv. xix. 16.



dictates of right reason, or what is the interpretation of Scripture. He speaks as if no such book as the *Methods of Ethics* could or would ever be written, as if no such problem as that of interpretation would ever bring not peace but a sword, and lands himself finally in an easy chair of satisfied assurance.

No doubt, it would be easy to accuse him, as Kant was accused, of a conventional conformity to such religious principles as were current then in polite society; and it would not be impossible to glean passages from his writings which would give plausible colour to such a plea. But the more charitable, and, when the general candid fearless tenor of his life is considered, the truer hypothesis surely is that Locke with all his strivings after philosophical elevation, after absolute detachment, is still the child of his age. The moment for challenging the truth of that which he appears to have accepted whole-heartedly as the "written word of God," had not arrived. The combined chill of that Protestantism which, since the Reformation, has tried with varying success, to capture the Church and people of England, and of the Rationalism which cast a blight over the close of the seventeenth, and the whole of the eighteenth centuries, had not, in Locke's time, frozen respect for "Holy Writ:" the day of the higher criticism with its desiccating theories and perplexing contradictions was not yet. In excepting the Bible, when he flung all else into the crucible of Reason, Locke was acting in accordance with the thought and instinct of his age. Perhaps this is the place to point out that he was emphatically one of those extreme Protestants which the Church of England, while strenuously claiming Her Catholic heritage, harbours as members and sometimes even as teachers. His painful remarks, in some early letters, concerning Roman Catholic worship in Belgium, alike discreditable

to his sense of reverence, taste, and wisdom, need not be quoted ; they can be paralleled unfortunately in the writings and behaviour of some English tourists even now. But there is an entry in the diary which he kept during his stay in France, an entry so unaware, so naïve, so unconscious a revelation of his real view of doctrine that it should be quoted : " 19th, Ash Wednesday, public admonitions happen seldom ; the last instances were, one for striking a cuff on the ear in the Church, on a communion-day, for which he was hindered from receiving ; the other for marrying his daughter to a Papist, for which he stood excommunicated six months. It reaches no further than exclusion from the Eucharist, not from Church or Sermons." \* This odd exaltation of the Sermon at the expense of the Liturgy is characteristically Protestant. Locke was the quintessence, the finest flower of English common-sense left to its own unhindered " judgment." He has crystallised in lucid, pointed phrases, the unemotional sagacity, the prudent foresight, the pedestrian obviousness, the quenching moderation for which the typical Englishman seems to go searching throughout his life. For all practical purposes, though it is certainly recorded of him that he could " joke a friend," he was devoid of wit and innocent of satire. He could neither cut and scarify with Pope—

" Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,  
 Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne ;  
 View him with scornful yet with jealous eyes,  
 And hate for arts that caused himself to rise ;  
 Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,  
 And without sneering teach the rest to sneer ;  
 Willing to wound and yet afraid to strike,  
 Just hint a fault and hesitate dislike ;  
 Alike reserved to blame or to commend ;  
 A timorous foe and a suspicious friend.

Who but must laugh if such a man there be !  
 Who would not weep if Atticus were he ! "

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\* Locke's Journal kept in France. *King's Life*, vol. i. p. 112.

nor destroy and bludgeon a foe with Dryden—

"Shadwell alone of all my sons is he,  
Who stands confirmed in full stupidity ;  
The rest to some faint meaning make pretence,  
But Shadwell never deviates into sense."

Was ever a verb used more murderously ? Yet possibly, without the withering breath of the Lockian philosophy, helping to dry men's contempt and contract their sympathies, Pope, at any rate, might have been other than he actually was. Locke was a scholar and therefore avoided brutal philistinism ; a gentleman, and so seldom blundered into absolute unawareness. Nevertheless, he bequeathed to us, in some sort, learning deprived of stimulus, content devoid of joy, wisdom shorn of brilliance, life stripped of colour, fragrance, warmth. As a protest against some period of deliberate exaggeration, of wilful sentimentality, had such ever occurred, his legacy might have had its overwhelming value ; but as an enduring, ever-present gift to mankind while the race struggles and gropes amid the lights and shades of this enigmatical existence, it was perhaps not convincingly attractive.

" Ah ! but that's the world's side, there's the wonder,  
Thus they see you, praise you, think they know you."

Certainly, " the world's side " was cold, passionless often, but it was, after all, only a side ; for no one ought to forget that along with this curious, unemotional *parti pris*, with and in spite of his carefully cultivated detachment, Locke had, hidden in the depths of his heart, that true religious sense which is the heritage of all men of goodwill, belonging though they do to parties widely if not irreparably and irrevocably sundered : " Our Saviour's great rule that we should *love our neighbour as ourselves* is such a fundamental truth for the regulating human society,

that I think, that by that alone, one might, without difficulty, determine all the cases and doubts in social morality."\* Moreover, there are still two additions which must be made to any account of him which even tries to be fair; viz. the recognition of one inward quality—what Locke was to himself; and the recognition of one outward quality—what he was to his close, personal friends. After all, the average world is blunt, dense, obtuse; which of us would care for it to pass sole judgment upon us?

To take first, "Locke-in-himself," as Kant would express it. Behind, underneath all the chill, all the detachment, all the dreary accuracy of the appraisement of humanity at its apparent dismal value, there burned in him one abiding passion, a passion indeed, the adoring love of Truth. His patience in the search for it was nothing short of colossal. Having been prevented for a second time from going to Rome, Locke wrote: "Were I not accustomed to leave Fortune to dispose of me contrary to my design or expectation, I should be very angry to be thus turned out of my way;" † and again—"It is fit such a slight bubble as I am, should let itself be carried at the fancy of wind and tide, without pretending to direct its own motion, I think I shall learn to do so hereafter—this is the surest way to be at ease." ‡

Almost superhuman though such detached patience as Locke's may seem to mere irritable human creatures as most of us prove when turned out of our way, it pales altogether when compared to his devotion to abstract truth. This, in its intensity and persistence, was the motive passion of his life: "It is a duty we owe to God as the fountain and author of all truth, who is truth itself;

\* *Conduct of the Understanding*, § 43.

† Letter to Dr. John Mappletott. Lord King's *Life of Locke*, vol. i. p. 82.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 83.

and it is a duty also we owe to our own selves, if we will deal candidly and sincerely with our own souls, to have our minds constantly disposed to entertain and receive truth wheresoever we meet with it, or under whatsoever appearance of plain or ordinary, strange, new or perhaps displeasing, it may come in our way. Truth is the proper object, the proper riches and furniture of the mind, and according as his stock of this is, so is the difference and value of one man above another." \* He has forgotten, at any rate for the moment, all about that "plenty of all sorts of those things which can with most ease, and pleasure and variety preserve," a man "longest in the world : " "Our first and great duty is to bring to our studies and to our inquiries after knowledge a mind covetous of truth ; that seeks after nothing else, and after that impartially ; and embraces it how poor, how contemptible, how unfashionable soever it may seem." †

Elsewhere he wrote : "He that would seriously set upon the search of Truth ought in the first place to prepare his mind with a love of it ; for he that loves it not will not take much pains to get it, nor be much concerned when he misses it. There is nobody in the Commonwealth of learning who does not profess himself a lover of truth ; and there is not a rational creature that would not take it amiss to be thought otherwise of. And yet for all this one may truly say, that there are very few lovers of truth for truth's sake. Even amongst those who persuade themselves that they are so." ‡ The reality of Locke's love appears in his protestations to his friend William Molyneux, upon which protestations he also acted. Writing to his friend under date, September 20, 1692, he said—

\* *Study*. (Lord King's *Life of Locke*, vol. i. p. 187.)

† *Of Study*, p. 188.

‡ *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. xix. § 1.

"If there be anything wherein you think me mistaken,\* I beg you to deal freely with me, that either I may clear it up to you, or reform it in the next edition. For I flatter myself that I am so sincere a lover of truth, that it is very indifferent to me, so I am possessed of it, whether it be my own or any other's discovery. For I count any parcel of this gold not the less to be valued, not the less enriching, because I wrought it not out of the mine myself. I think every one ought to contribute to the common stock, and to have no other scruple or shyness about the receiving of truth, but that he will not be imposed on, and take counterfeit and what will not bear the touch for genuine and real truth."

Three months later, he wrote—

"I am far from imagining myself infallible; and yet I should be loth to differ from any thinking man, being fully persuaded there are very few things of pure speculation, wherein two thinking men, who impartially seek truth, can differ, if they give themselves the leisure to examine their hypothesis, and understand one another."

If the reader think that Locke's incurable optimism is not justified by the facts of the History of Controversy, he cannot by any means fail to perceive how highly the philosopher rated Truth. In the same letter, Locke writes even more tersely, "I am not fond of anything in my book, because I have once thought or said it."

Though this is, no doubt, the only commendable attitude, probably few authors could sincerely say the same. Moreover, that those who knew him well realised that his invitation of criticism was no idle form is proved by Molyneux' letter to him, written August 12, 1693, and by Locke's reply to that on August 23. These letters are more germane to the matter of a subsequent chapter, but a sentence from each may be quoted as testimony to the

\* i.e., in the *Essay on the Human Understanding*.

genuineness of Locke's love of truth, Molyneux writes : " Since with your usual modesty you are pleased to require my thoughts more particularly concerning it, I shall, with all freedom, but at the same time with all deference propose them to you."

Many of us aver that we like a candid opinion ; when it is uttered to us, our appreciation seems less obvious. Locke really did. After expressing his past anxiety because he had not heard from Molyneux for so long, he wrote : " But you have made me amends plentifully, by the length and kindness, and let me add too, the freedom of your letter." He proceeded to deal with Molyneux' objections on a point of importance in the *Thoughts Concerning Education*. His explanations covered several pages, but they satisfied Molyneux, who replied from Dublin in September : " The answer you make to what I writ of your thoughts of education does fully satisfy me. But, I assure you, sir, I was not the only person shocked at that passage. I find several stumble at it, as taking little playthings, that children are very apt to desire and ask for, to be matters of fancy and affectation, within your rule. But seeing in your last letter you confine desires of fancy and affectation to other matters, I am satisfied in this business."

The love of speculative truth and the practice of truth speaking must surely be at any rate allied ; and Locke's recommendations as to the necessity of inculcating truth upon children, and the means of doing it, may well be quoted here—

" Lying . . . is so ill a quality, and the Mother of so many ill ones that spawn from it, and take shelter under it, that a Child should be brought up in the greatest Abhorrence of it imaginable. It should always (when occasionally it comes to be mentioned) be spoken of before him with

the utmost Detestation, as a Quality so wholly inconsistent with the Name and Character of a Gentleman, that nobody of any Credit can bear the Imputation of a Lie : a Mark that is judged the utmost Disgrace, which debases a Man to the lowest Degree of a shameful Meanness, and ranks him with the most contemptible Part of Mankind, and the abhorred Rascality ; and is not to be endured in any one who would converse with People of Condition, or have any Esteem or Reputation in the World." \*

As we realise the meaning of these burning, relentless, penetrating phrases, we can only compare Locke's limitless contempt for the liar with Montaigne's hot denunciation : " En verité le mentir est un maudict vice : nous ne sommes hommes, et nous ne tenons les uns aux aultres, que par la parole. Si nous en cognoissons l'horreur et le poids, nous le poursuivrons à feu, plus iustement que d'aultres crimes." †

In a world which is so careless, so inaccurate, so haphazard, and sometimes so deliberately false and dishonest as ours, those rare beings like Locke, Stuart Mill, and Henry Sidgwick, who care supremely for Truth, must ever exercise an irresistible attraction. That with all their love of it, and patient search for it, their attainment is, where all our most ultimate and vital interests lie, so dim and partial, is after all what one might expect when the finite sets out on the hopeless quest of grasping infinity by the understanding alone, that understanding of which Locke himself wrote—

" The mind of man being very narrow, and so slow in making acquaintance with things, and taking in new truths, that no one man is capable, in a much longer life than ours, to know all truths ; it becomes our prudence in our search after knowledge to employ our thoughts about fundamental

\* *Thoughts concerning Education*, § 131.

† *Essais*, Liv. I. ch. ix.



and material questions, carefully avoiding those that are trifling, and not suffering ourselves to be diverted from our main ever purpose, by those that are merely incidental."\* That those who sincerely search for truth discover so comparatively little is perhaps one of the most convincing proofs that Browning's second alternative, in his famous question, is the true one—

"Is this our ultimate stage, or starting place  
To try man's foot, if it will creep or climb?"

There remains the side of Locke—the most attractive side—which he showed to his intimate friends. By way of accounting for the affection which, undoubtedly, he inspired, a quotation from his *Journal* may perhaps ease the passage from the philosopher to the man. It is only a touch: he is in holiday mood, for which, curiously enough, he sees fit, a little further on, to apologise. He has been visiting Beauvais Cathedral, concerning which he remarks, "built, as they say, by the English, who, it seems, had not time to complete the whole, and the French have never thought fit to finish it,"—an unusual and quite incorrect origin of Beauvais. Then he adds: "Hence we went three leagues to Tilliard to bed. Good mutton, and a good supper, clean linen of the country, and a pretty girl to lay it (who was an angel compared with the fiends at Poy), made us some amends for the past night's suffering." †

The first testimony of a friend shall come from one of Locke's pupils, the third Antony Ashley, Earl of Shaftesbury, who, in middle life, wrote thus of the man whom he called his "foster-father": "In our education Mr. Locke governed according to his own principles, since published by him. . . . I was his more particular charge, being, as

\* *Conduct of the Understanding*, § 43.

† *King's Life of Locke*, vol. i. p. 89.

eldest son, taken by my grandfather and bred under his immediate care, Mr. Locke having the absolute direction of my education, and to whom, next my immediate parents, as I must own the greatest obligation, so I have ever preserved the highest gratitude and duty."

Locke's friendship with William Molyneux borders on romance, if such a term can be used of the eighteenth century. This friendship which began in 1692, for the cold purposes of philosophical converse, and was carried on mainly by correspondence, kindled into lively regard. In 1695, Locke wrote: "My decaying health does not promise me any long stay in this world; you are the only person in it I desire to see once, and to converse some time with, before I leave it."

Not until three years later was the wish realised, when Molyneux stayed in London for five weeks, and visited Oates, where Locke was living with the Mashams. Of that visit, Molyneux wrote, on his return to Dublin: "'Tis with the greatest satisfaction imaginable that I recollect what then passed between us, and I reckon it the happiest scene of my whole life." In October of the same year, Molyneux died. Writing to his brother, Dr. Molyneux, Locke said—

"I have lost in your brother not only an ingenious and learned acquaintance, that all the world esteemed, but an intimate and sincere friend whom I truly loved, and by whom I was truly loved; and what a loss that is, those only can be sensible, who know how valuable and how scarce a true friend is, and how far to be preferred to all other sorts of treasure." Oates, October 27, 1698.

"How valuable and how scarce a true friend is!" As the frozen chill of the eighteenth century falls on us, we are reminded irresistibly of Pope's sad lines on Gay, of Swift's heart-rending estimate of his friends' regard.

Finally, there is the "character," furnished to Le Clerc by a woman who knew the philosopher well. Can it have come from Lady Masham, *née* Damaris Cudworth, the daughter of Dr. Ralph Cudworth, Master of Christ's College, Cambridge, who was as convinced an *a priori* as Locke was an empirical philosopher? A few extracts must serve to show what, according to this, Locke was to his friends:

"He accommodated himself to the level of the most moderate understandings, and in disputing with them, he did not diminish the force of their arguments against himself. . . . He felt pleasure in conversing with all sorts of people, and tried to profit by their information, which arose not only from the good education he had received, but from the opinion he entertained that there was nobody from whom something useful could not be got. . . . He considered civility as not only something agreeable and proper to gain people's hearts, but as a duty of Christianity, which ought to be more insisted on than it commonly is. . . .

"His conversation was very agreeable to all sorts of people, and even to ladies, and nobody was better received than he was among people of the highest rank." (Lord King records the fact that Lord Halifax "enjoyed the style of his conversation, which was a happy union of wit and good sense." \*) "He was by no means austere. . . . He knew how to soften everything he said, and to give it an agreeable turn. If he joked his friends, it was about a trifling fault, or about something which it was advantageous for them to know. As he was particularly civil, even when he began to joke, people were satisfied that he would end by saying something obliging. He never ridiculed a misfortune, or any natural defect.

"He was very charitable to the poor, provided they were not the idle, or the profligate, who did not frequent any

\* *Life of Locke*, vol. i. p. 61.

## CHAPTER IV

### LOCKE'S ETHICS

MOST people who consider Locke's Ethics probably call him a utilitarian. Yet, applied to him, that name is an anachronism. In his *Autobiography*, J. S. Mill wrote : " It was in the winter of 1822-23 that I formed the plan of a little Society, to be composed of young men agreeing in fundamentals—acknowledging utility as their standard in ethics and politics, and a certain number of the principal corollaries drawn from it in the philosophy I had accepted—and meeting once a fortnight to read essays and discuss questions conformably to the premises thus agreed on. The facts would be hardly worth mentioning, but for the circumstance that the name I gave to the society I had planned was the Utilitarian Society. It was the first time that any one had taken the title of Utilitarian ; and the term made its way into the language from this humble source. I did not invent the word, but found it in one of Galt's novels, the *Annals of the Parish*, in which the Scotch clergyman of whom the book is a supposed autobiography, is represented as warning his parishioners not to leave the Gospel and become Utilitarians." \*

A more accurate title for Locke is Hedonist ; for he is

\* *Autobiography*. J. S. Mill, p. 79. As a matter of fact, Jeremy Bentham used the word in 1781, and, in 1802, suggested it to Dumont as a substitute for " Benthamite." Sir Leslie Stephen (*English Utilitarians*, vol. i. p. 178) writes: " He afterwards thought it a bad name, because it gave 'a vague idea' (Works x. 582) and substituted 'greatest happiness principle' for 'principle of utility.' (Works 1, *Morals and Legislation*)."

certainly an adherent of the pleasure-pain school, resolving good into pleasure (he uses that word, of course, in an elevated and comprehensive sense), and evil into pain. Locke, however, differs from the modern utilitarian in not basing morals on experience, but upon theology: in the region of conduct, he is, at most, but half an empiricist.

"Things then are good or evil, only in relation to pleasure or pain. That we call good, which is apt to cause or increase pleasure, or diminish pain in us; or else to procure, or preserve, us the possession of any other good, or absence of any evil. And, on the contrary, we name that evil, which is apt to produce or increase any pain, or diminish any pleasure in us; or else to procure us any evil or deprive us of any good. By pleasure or pain, I must be understood to mean of body or mind, as they are commonly distinguished, though in truth they be only different constitutions of the mind, sometimes occasioned by disorders in the body, sometimes by thoughts of the mind." \*

This notion of the dependence of feeling on thought is not original in Locke. Montaigne in his essay—*Que le Goust des Biens et des Maulx despend, en bonne partie, de l'Opinion que nous en avons*—quoting from Epictetus, wrote: "Les hommes, dict une sentence grecque ancienne, sont tormentez par les opinions qu'ils ont des choses, non par les choses mesmes . . . si les maulx n'ont entree en nous que par nostre iugement, il semble qu'il soit en nostre pouvoir de les mespriser, ou contourner à bien." † Allied to this view are the words he had used in a previous essay: "La vie n'est de soy ny bien ny mal; c'est la place du bien et du mal selon que vous la leur faictes . . . L'utilité du vivre n'est pas en l'espace: elle est en l'usage: tel a

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, II. xx. § 2.

† *Essais*, de Michel de Montaigne, I. xl.

vescu longtemps, qui a peu vescu. Attendez vous y pendant que vous y estes : il gist en vostre volonté, non au nombre des ans, que vous ayez assez vescu." \* Some people have thought that Hamlet's aphorism—

" There is nothing either good or bad but thinking  
Makes it so," †

was but an echo of Montaigne in his fortieth essay.

Locke elaborates his main point of view in the chapter next to the one already quoted : " Now, because pleasure and pain are produced in us by the operation of certain objects, either on our minds or our bodies and in different degrees ; therefore what has an aptness to produce pleasure in us, is that we call good, and what is apt to produce pain in us we call evil, for no other reason but for its aptness to produce pleasure and pain in us, wherein consists our happiness and misery. Further, though what is apt to produce any degree of pleasure be in itself good, and what is apt to produce any degree of pain, be evil, yet it often happens that we do not call it so, when it comes in competition with a greater of its sort ; because when they come in competition, the degrees also of pleasure and pain have justly a preference. So that if we will rightly estimate what we call good and evil, we shall find it lies much in comparison : for the cause of every less degree of pain, as well as every greater degree of pleasure, has the nature of good and *vice versa*." ‡

Further on, Locke sets forth the same point of view still more absolutely, also referring back to these two earlier passages : " Good and evil, as hath been shown (bk. 2, ch. 20, § 2, and ch. 21, § 42), are nothing but pleasure or pain, or that which occasions or procures pleasure or

\* *Essais*, de Michel de Montaigne, I. xix.

† *Hamlet*, II. ii. 256.

‡ *Essay on the Human Understanding*, II. xxi. § 42:

pain to us. Moral good and evil, then, is only the conformity or disagreement of our voluntary actions to some law whereby good or evil is drawn on us by the will and power of the law-maker : which good and evil, pleasure or pain, attending an observance or breach of the law, by the decree of the law-maker is what we call reward and punishment." \*

Then, with that analytic carefulness which distinguishes him, Locke proceeds to set forth the *three kinds of law* : "divine law," "civil law," and "the law of opinion or reputation as I may call it." † The third he also calls "philosophical law." From this division, it is quite plain that his basis of morals differs from that of the Utilitarians of the nineteenth century, who either denied the existence of God, or pleaded that if He existed, man, at any rate, could know nothing about Him, hence nothing of His laws. Of the first, "divine law," Locke writes : "The divine law, whereby I mean that law which God has set to the actions of men, whether promulgated to them by the light of nature or the voice of revelation." ‡ This reference to our twofold means of knowing the divine law is singularly interesting, as the first, "the light of nature" seems to restore to us that power of intuition which, in the first book of the *Essay*, Locke came so near to denying. He continues : "That God has given a rule whereby men should govern themselves, I think there is nobody so brutish as to deny. He has a right to do it ; we are His creatures ; He has goodness and wisdom to direct our actions to that which is best ; and He has power to enforce it by rewards and punishments, of infinite weight and duration in another life ; for nobody can take us out of His hands. This is the only true touchstone of moral rectitude ; and by comparing them to this law it is that men judge of the most considerable

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, II. xxviii. § 5.

† *Ibid.* §§ 7-10.

‡ *Ibid.* II. xxviii. § 8.

moral good or evil of their actions ; that is, whether, as duties or sins, they are like to procure them happiness or misery from the hands of the Almighty."

It should not be forgotten here that at the very outset of the *Essay* Locke had written : " I grant the existence of God is in so many ways manifest, and the obedience we owe Him so congruous to the light of reason that a great part of mankind give testimony to the law of nature ; but yet, I think it must be allowed that several moral rules may receive from mankind a very general approbation, without either knowing or admitting the true ground of morality ; which can only be the will and law of a God, who sees men in the dark, has in His hand rewards and punishments, and power enough to call to account the proudest offender." \* One other passage from the chapter where Locke deals with *Our Knowledge of the existence of a God* will suffice to show his doctrine of the basis of morality : " Though our own being furnishes us, as I have shown, with an evident and incontestable proof of a Deity ; and I believe nobody can avoid the cogency of it ; who will but as carefully attend to it as to any other demonstration of so many parts ; yet this being so fundamental a truth, and of that consequence that all religion and genuine morality depend thereon, I doubt not but I shall be forgiven by my reader, if I go over some parts of the argument again, and enlarge a little more upon them." †

Locke also describes " civil " and " philosophical " law, obviously apportioning a large share of practical effectiveness to the latter, the " law of opinion or reputation " as he otherwise calls it : " The measure of what is everywhere called and esteemed virtue and vice, is the approbation or dislike, praise or blame, which by a secret and tacit consent, establishes itself in the several societies,

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, I. iii. § 6.

† *Ibid.* IV. x. § 7.



tribes, and clubs of men in the world, whereby several actions come to find credit or disgrace amongst them, according to the judgment, maxims, or fashions of that place. . . .

"That this is the common measure of virtue and vice will appear to any one who considers, that though that passes for vice in one country, which is counted a virtue, or at least not vice, in another, yet everywhere, virtue and praise, vice and blame, go together. Virtue is everywhere that which is thought praiseworthy; and nothing else but that which has the allowance of public esteem is called virtue." \*

Molyneux, Locke's Irish friend, urged him to produce a *Treatise on Morals*. Locke's reply was written from Oates, on March 30, 1696; the following passages from that letter throw light on his general attitude: "Nay, I so far incline to comply with your desires, that I even, now and then, lay by some material for it, as they occasionally occur in the roving of my mind. . . . Did the world want a rule, I confess there could be no work so necessary, nor so commendable. But the Gospel contains so perfect a body of Ethicks, that reason may be excused from that inquiry, since she may find man's duty easier and clearer in revelation than in herself. Think not this the excuse of a lazy man, though it be, perhaps, of one who having a sufficient rule for his actions, is content therewith, and thinks he may, perhaps, with more profit to himself, employ the little time and strength he has in other researches, wherein he finds himself more in the dark."

No one acquainted with Locke's life can doubt that into his letters to Molyneux he poured much of his real inner self; and this letter is a most valuable additional proof therefore that he really and deliberately based Ethics

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, II. xxviii. §§ 10, 11;

on revelation, not on experience. Nevertheless, he definitely maintained that morality is capable of scientific demonstration. He writes, *e.g.* thus: "The idea of a Supreme Being, infinite in power, goodness, and wisdom, whose workmanship we are, and on whom we depend; and the idea of ourselves, as understanding, rational beings, being such as are clear in us, would, I suppose, if duly considered and pursued, afford such foundations of our duty and rules of action as might place morality amongst the sciences capable of demonstration; wherein I doubt not but from self-evident propositions, by necessary consequences, as incontestable as those in mathematics, the measures of right and wrong might be made out, to any one that will apply himself with the same indifferency and attention to the one, as he does to the other of these sciences." \*

"With the same indifferency" suggests an interesting inference.

He refers, later on, to "that *conjecture* which I suggest, chap. 3, viz. 'That morality' is capable of demonstration as well as mathematics." . . . I doubt not but if a right method were taken, a great part of morality might be made out with that clearness that could leave to a considering man no more reason to doubt than he could have to doubt of the truth of propositions in mathematics which have been demonstrated to him." †

This whole account would be misleading without the inclusion of one fine passage, where Locke exchanges Empiricism for something extraordinarily near Mysticism: "Some of the ideas that are in the mind, are so there, that they can be by themselves immediately compared one with another; and in these the mind is able to perceive, that they agree, or disagree, as clearly as that it has them.

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. iii. § 18.

† *Ibid.* IV. xii. § 8.

Thus the mind perceives that the arc of a circle is less than the whole circle as clearly as it does the idea of a circle ; and this, therefore, as has been said, I call intuitive knowledge, which is certain, beyond all doubt, and needs no probation, nor can have any ; this being the highest of human certainty. In this consists the evidence of all those maxims which nobody has any doubt about, but every man (does not, as is said, only assent to, but) knows to be true, as soon as ever they are proposed to his understanding. In the discovery of, and assent to, these truths, there is no use of the discursive faculty, no need of reasoning, but they are known by a higher and superior degree of evidence. And such, if I may guess at things unknown, I am apt to think that angels have now, and the spirits of just men made perfect shall have, in a future state, of thousands of things, which now either wholly escape our apprehensions, or which, our shortsighted reason, having got some faint glimpse of, we, in the dark, grope after." \*

Surely this passage bars Locke off for ever from the thorough-going adherents of the "sensationalist" school? Still, it is impossible to avoid wondering why, since he could arrive at this point, since his analysis of human thought and action was often so penetrating, his pursuit of actual fact so fearless, he did not dream that some men at all times and all men at some times "perceive" the truth about Conduct directly, intuitively, as they do that of Mathematics. It is as plain to some men, as directly plain without the "use of the discursive faculty," that, to quote a famous phrase, "it is better to suffer than to do injustice," as it is that the arc of a circle is less than the whole. They have no more doubt about, no more need of proof of the one than of the other. In particular cases of difficult action, too, some men can see ethical rightness in a flash,

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. xvii. § 14.

at least as clearly as they grasp mathematical truth at sight. Though we can often justify conduct by a subsequent train of reasoning, we occasionally act, and that rightly, with spontaneous certainty, with no use whatever of the discursive faculty. To take an example from what may be fact or fiction, but which, if fiction, is true to human life. Ivàn Ivànovitch certainly did not rely on reflexion, on argument, on the discursive faculty. It is impossible to suppose that after the event he could have cared to listen to Starosta or Pope. Why should a man attend to the dreary exposition of a matter already perfectly plain to him? Further, how should a man in doubt as to an action of the first magnitude of importance dare to turn instantly to the business of amusing innocent children? Ivàn neither listened nor doubted. The Scourge of God chops no logic:—

“ Ivàn's self, as he turned his honey-coloured head,  
Was just in act to drop, 'twixt fir-cones—each a dome—  
The scooped-out yellow gourd presumably the home  
Of Kolokol the Big: the bell, therein to hitch,  
—An acorn-cup—was ready: Ivàn Ivànovitch  
Turned with it in his mouth.

They told him he was free  
As air to walk abroad. ‘How otherwise?’ asked he.”\*

Like every person who reflects on human conduct, to whatever school he may belong, Locke found himself confronted by the problem of Free Will. He deals with it in his chapter *On Power*, in the second book of the *Essay*. He premises that “the mind . . . considers in one thing the possibility of having any of its simple ideas changed, and in another the possibility of making that change; and so comes by that idea which we call power.”† Having our ideas changed he calls passive power; changing them, active power. He further argues that we get a clearer idea of active power from our spirits than from our bodies:

\* *The Poetical Works of R. Browning*, vol. xv. p. 56.

† *Essay on the Human Understanding*, II. xxi. § 1.

"If we will consider it attentively, bodies, by our senses, do not afford us so clear and distinct an idea of active power, as we have from reflection on the operations of our mind." \*

Recalling the fact that the mind possesses two great powers, *will* and *understanding*, Locke adds: "Every one, I think, finds in himself a power to begin or forbear, continue or put an end to several actions in himself. From the consideration of the extent of this power of the mind over the action of the man, which every one finds in himself, arise the ideas of liberty and necessity." † He goes on to explain precisely what he means by the ideas of liberty and necessity: "The idea of liberty is the idea of a power in any agent to do or forbear any particular action, according to the determination or thought of the mind, whereby either of them is preferred to the other: where either of them is not in the power of the agent to be produced by him, according to his volition, there he is not at liberty; the agent is under necessity. So that liberty cannot be where there is no thought, no volition, no will: but there may be thought, there may be will, there may be volition, where there is no liberty." ‡

He solves that which in his somewhat peremptory way he calls the "unreasonable, because unintelligible question, viz. whether man's will be free or no," by arguing that will is nothing but a "power of thought," whereas "liberty . . . is the power a man has to do or forbear doing any particular action." § But, of course, as he himself at once admits, he has shifted, not solved the question. "I think the question is not proper, whether the will be free, but whether a man be free." ||

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, II. xxi. § 4.

† *Ibid.* II. xxi. § 7.

‡ *Ibid.* II. xxi. § 14.

§ *Ibid.* II. xxi. § 8.

|| *Ibid.* II. xxi. § 21.

He replies (a) that so far as a man is really able to translate will into action, in other words, so long as having a preference for doing a thing he actually does it, he is free: and (b) that he is not so free "to will," as he is "to act what he wills." \* He next asks, "What determines the will?" His answer is: "The true and proper answer is the mind." But this, he sees again, is not really a reply to the question, because we can still inquire "what moves the mind?" And then, just as we fancy we are on the brink of satisfaction, we are invited to put ourselves off with the old pleasure-pain fetish: "The motive to change is always some uneasiness:" † *i.e. desire*, which he is most careful to differentiate from *will*: "Good and evil, present and absent, it is true, work upon the mind; but that which immediately determines the will, from time to time, to every voluntary action, is the uneasiness of desire, fixed on some absent good, either negative as indolency to one in pain; or positive as enjoyment of pleasure. That it is this uneasiness that determines the will to the successive voluntary actions, whereof the greatest part of our lives is made up, and by which we are conducted through different courses to different ends, I shall endeavour to shew both from experience and the reason of the thing." ‡

If any one feel dissatisfied still, feel a lurking discomfort because the difficulty does not seem cleared up, let him ask himself whether his "uneasiness" be not due to the fact that Locke has, though, no doubt unwittingly, answered psychologically the question which ethics asked. A study of Dr. Sidgwick's treatment of this elusive problem, though he does not profess to solve it, may redress the balance of comfort: for he, with his piercing analysis of the

\* *Ibid.* II. xxi. § 22.

† *Ibid.* II. xxi. § 29.

‡ *Ibid.* II. xxi. § 33.

ever-shifting human mind, shows us, at last, precisely where the difficulty lies, its exact nature ; hence its insolubility by our finite intelligence, here and now.\*

It may not be without interest to include in this brief account of Locke's ethical views, two matters which are certainly allied to the Science of Conduct. The first is his treatment of Authority. In the *Essay on Human Understanding*, he only speaks of what we may call intellectual Authority ; he writes : " The fourth and last wrong measure of probability I shall take notice of, and which keeps in ignorance of error more people than all the other together, is that which I mentioned in the foregoing chapter : I mean the giving up our assent to the common, received opinions, either of our friends or party, neighbourhood or country." †

It is in the *Third Letter on Toleration*, and in the two treatises of *Government* that he deals with authority in general. Parental authority, extending to the use, when necessary, of correction and force, he justifies on the ground of the weakness and ignorance of children : the passage is rather long, but to the educator should be interesting, especially as the *Letters on Toleration* are not so generally possessed as some other of Locke's writings.

" A father, being entrusted with the care and provision of his child, is, as well bound in duty, as fitted by natural love and tenderness, to supply the defects of his tender age. When it is born, the child cannot move itself for the ease and help of natural necessities, the parents' hands must supply that inability, and feed, cleanse, and swaddle it. Age having given more strength and the exercise of the limbs, the parents are discharged from the trouble of putting meat into the mouth of the child, clothing or

\* *Vide, Methods of Ethics*, Bk. I. ch. v. specially, § 3.

† *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. xx. 17.

unclothing, or carrying him in their arms. The same duty and affection which required such kind of helps to the infant, makes them extend their thoughts to other cares for him, when he is grown a little bigger ; it is not only a present support but a future comfortable subsistence begins to be thought on : to this some art or science is necessary, but the child's ignorance or want of prospect makes him unable to choose. And therein the father has a power to choose for him, that the flexible and docile part of life may not be squandered away, and the time of instruction and improvement be lost, for want of direction. The trade or art, being chosen by the father, it is the exercise and industry of the child must acquire it for himself : but industry, usually wanting in children, the spur which reason and foresight gives to the endeavours of grown men, the father's rod and correction is fain to supply that want, to make him apply himself to the use of those means and helps, which are proper to make him what he is designed to be. But, when the child is once come to the state of manhood, and to be the possessor and free disposer of his goods and estate, he is then discharged from the discipline of his parents, and they have no longer any right to choose any art, science, or course of life for him ; or, by force, to make him apply himself to the use of those means which are proper to make him be what he designs to be." \*

Locke further maintains that " a commission from the father or mother . . . authorises schoolmasters, tutors, and masters to use force upon their scholars or apprentices."† But he declines strenuously to allow any power to magistrates to choose the way of life for adults, whether in the matter of religion or otherwise, on the ground that no parallel case can be established between the ignorance and

\* *Third Letter on Toleration.*

† *Ibid.*



incapacity of infancy and the responsibility of normal adults: "Those reasons which subject children in their nonage, to the use of force, may not, nor do concern them, at years of discretion." \*

In the first book of the *Treatises of Civil Government*, Locke, answering Sir Robert Filmer, argues that if a father is to be given absolute right over his child on the ground of parentage, the mother must have at least as much right, therefore the father's cannot be absolute: "The mother cannot be denied an equal share in the begetting of the child, and so the absolute authority of the father will not arise from that." †

In the sixth chapter of the second book, Locke elaborates his argument: "For whatever obligation, nature and the right of generation lays on children, it must certainly bind them equal to both the concurrent causes of it. And accordingly we see the positive law of God, everywhere joins them together, without distinction, when it commands the obedience of children. 'Honour thy father and thy mother,' Exod. xx. 12. 'Whosoever curseth his father or his mother,' Lev. xix. 3. 'Children obey your parents,' etc., Eph. vi. 1., is the style of the Old and New Testament."

And then he returns to his former position concerning the basis of parental power: "The power then that parents have over their children, arises from that duty which is incumbent on them to take care of their offspring, during the imperfect state of childhood. To inform the mind, and govern the action of their yet ignorant nonage, till reason shall take its place, and ease them of that trouble, is what the children want, and parents are bound to." This view he elaborates still further in the fifteenth chapter: "Paternal or parental power is nothing but that which

\* *Third Letter on Toleration.*

† *Treatises of Civil Government*, Bk. I. ch. vi.

parents have over their children, to govern them for the children's good, till they come to the use of reason, or a state of knowledge wherein they may be supposed capable to understand that rule whether it be the law of nature, or the municipal law of their country, they are to govern themselves by : capable, I say, to know it, as well as several others, who live as freemen under that law. The affection and tenderness which God hath planted in the breasts of parents towards their children makes it evident that this is not intended to be a severe arbitrary government, but only for the help, instruction, and preservation of their offspring. But happen as it will, there is, as I have proved, no reason why it should be thought to extend to life and death, at any time, over their children, more than over anybody else, neither can there be any pretence, why this parental power should keep the child, when grown to a man, in subjection to the will of his parents, any further than the having received life and education from his parents obliges him to respect, honour, and gratitude, assistance and support all his life to both father and mother. And thus it is true, the paternal is a natural government, but not at all extending itself to the ends and jurisdiction of that which is political. The power of the father doth not reach at all to the property of the child, which is only in his own disposing."

These extracts throw additional light on the paragraphs in the *Thoughts concerning Education*, where Locke deals with the relations of parents and children, and on that portion of his correspondence with Molyneux which is concerned with the views he had published. It is often said that parental discipline was unduly severe in the eighteenth century : yet this wise and tempered attitude seems preferable to the state condemned in those severe phrases of M. Guyau : " Quel est l'idéal moral proposé à

la plupart des enfants dans la famille ? Ne pas être trop bruyant, ne pas se mettre les doigts dans le nez ni dans la bouche, ne pas se servir à table avec les mains, ne pas mettre quand il pleut les pieds dans l'eau, etc. Être raisonnable ! Pour bien des parents, l'enfant raisonnable est une petite marionnette qui ne doit bouger que si on en tire les fils ; il doit avoir des mains pour ne toucher à rien, des yeux pour ne pas pétiller de désir à tout ce qu'il voit, des petits pieds pour ne point trotter bruyamment sur le plancher, une langue pour se taire." \*

It is not quite easy to decide whether Locke's observations upon *Enthusiasm* belong most properly to his psychology or his ethics. Perhaps they may be allowed to close this present chapter. Some people may remember Dr. Gore's observations about the English Christianity of the eighteenth century, "with its detestation of *Enthusiasm*, when a man like Bishop Butler could say of a man like George Whitefield : 'Sir, the pretending to extraordinary revelation and gifts of the Holy Ghost is a horrid thing, a very horrid thing.'" And he adds : "The idea then seems to have been that enthusiasm was something contradictory to settled organization and order, or to rational religion ; but this is the greatest possible mistake. . . . As a matter of fact, the enthusiasm of the first Christian Church could not have won the world, if the theologians of the Christian Church had not been maintaining their intellectual position in the face of the world's thought.† As a matter of fact, the great periods of Christian enthusiasm have always been in some close relation to the great periods of intellectual revival." ‡

\* *Éducation et Hérité*. Preface VII. viii.

† Cf. *La Fin du Paganisme*, Gaston Boissier, vol. i. p. 380.

‡ *The New Theology and the Old Religion*, The Rt. Rev. C. Gore, D.D., pp. 261, 262.

Dr. Gore hastens to note that "what Butler and his contemporaries meant by 'enthusiasm' was something different to what we mean by it."

As a matter of fact Locke's use is nearer to the original meaning of the word, "full of the God," for he generally uses it in the sense of inspired, though sometimes in his hands it comes to be nearly synonymous with what we now mean by mysticism, immediate apprehension in some degree of the supernatural: whereas commonly, nowadays, by enthusiasm people mean zeal, even sometimes bustling activity.

Locke, in the last book of the *Essay on the Human Understanding*, spoke of three grounds of assent; faith, reason, enthusiasm: \* and this latter he did not hesitate to call "the ungrounded fancies of a man's own brain."

Reason he defined as "natural revelation whereby the eternal Father of light and Foundation of all knowledge communicates to mankind that portion of truth, which he has laid within the reach of their natural faculties." † Of Revelation he wrote, in the same paragraph, that "it is natural Reason enlarged by a new set of discoveries, communicated by God immediately, which Reason vouches the truth of, by the testimony and proofs it gives, that they come from God." So, to him, even Revelation must justify itself somehow at the bar of human Reason, a necessity which to some of us would denude it of its value and interest. Enthusiasm Locke identifies with "immediate revelation," and he attempts to discredit it by the same rather cheap sneer which he had applied already to those who would repose confidence in Authority, declaring that it is "a much easier way for men to establish their opinions, and

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. xix. § 3.

† *Ibid.* § 4.

regulate their conduct, than the tedious and not always successful labour of strict reasoning."

Had the mystics been invariably stupid persons of limited intellect, Locke's indictment might seem less unworthy: but neither a love of ease nor an incapacity for sustained effort characterise, *e.g.* St. John of the Cross, Johann Ruysbroeck or St. Teresa de Jesus; nor, to come to Locke's own country, Richard Rolle, nor Mother Julian of Norwich. Yet, apparently without a pang, Locke writes: "In all ages, men, in whom melancholy has mixed with devotion, or whose conceit of themselves has raised them into an opinion of a greater familiarity with God, and a nearer admittance to His favours than is afforded to others, have often flattered themselves with a persuasion of an immediate intercourse with the Deity; "\* and their "enthusiasm" he does not hesitate to describe as "rising from the conceits of a warmed or over-weening brain:" † and again he declares "all the light they speak of is but a strong, though unguarded, persuasion of their own minds, that it is a truth." ‡

Yet a critic may be permitted to ask if Locke himself here be not the victim of a pure gratuitous assumption? He says contemptuously, "This is the way of talking of these men; they are sure because they are sure; and their persuasions are right, because they are strong in them." § Yet, it is possible to think that this sentence applies at least equally to its writer. The fact is that even Locke can beg a question. He writes: "Light, true light in the mind is, or can be, nothing else but the truth of any proposition; and if it be not a self-evident proposition, all the light it has or can have, is from the clearness and validity of those proofs upon which it is received. To

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. xix. § 5.

† *Ibid.* § 7.

‡ *Ibid.* § 11.

§ *Ibid.* § 9.

talk of any other light in the understanding is to put ourselves in the dark or in the power of the prince of darkness." \*

Now, what is this but pure dogmatism of at least as thorough-going a kind as any which a mystic could commit in the opposite direction? It is easy enough to declare that only one kind of mental light exists or can exist: it is less easy to prove the statement. Are not the following words, written some fifty-four years before Locke was born, more scientific, just because they are more analytic, and more willing to look all round the question?—

"It is a principle of philosophy that all means must be proportionate to the end, having a certain fitness and resemblance to it, such as shall be sufficient for the object in view . . . remember, among all creatures, the highest and the lowest, there is not one that comes near unto God, or that bears any likeness to His substance. . . .

"So also nothing that the imagination may conceive or the understanding comprehend in this life, is or can be a proximate means of union with God. For if we speak of natural knowledge, the understanding is incapable of comprehending anything unless it be presented to it under forms and images by the bodily senses. . . .

"Again, if we speak of supernatural acts—as far as possible in this life—the understanding in its bodily prison has neither the disposition nor the capacity requisite for the reception of the clear knowledge of God. . . .

"The understanding cannot be immediately directed in the way of God by any knowledge such as this . . . if it is to draw near unto God, it must do so by not understanding rather than by seeking to understand; yea, rather it must be by making itself blind, covering itself with darkness,

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. xix. § 13.

and not by opening its eyes, that it can attain to the divine enlightening." \*

Strange doctrine! how unintelligible, nay! to come to the hard fact, how unpalatable to the eighteenth century. "*Quod volumus facile credimus*," had Locke forgotten his own quotation? Had he, indeed, forgotten that in this very chapter he had written—

"God, I own, cannot be denied to be able to enlighten the understanding by a ray darted into the mind immediately from the fountain of all light." † That is far enough, no doubt, from "the dark night of the soul," which, according to St. John of the Cross, is the Way to God, for Locke is perpetually trafficking with the intellect alone, as if Humanity had neither will nor affection: and yet, when he is not really *thinking* about it, but is feeling, he can admit non-mental factors, can almost remind us of an episode in Ruysbroeck's life. For example, though Molyneux was immensely pleased with this account of "enthusiasm," and wrote from Dublin on March 26, 1695: "I must freely confess that if my notion of enthusiasm agrees with yours, there is no necessity of adding anything concerning it, more than by the bye, and in a single section in ch. 18, lib. 4. I conceive it to be no other than a religious sort of madness, and comprises not in it any mode of thinking or operation of the mind, different from what you have treated of in your Essay," yet, that affection might, even permissibly, dilute reason, appears in Locke's answer to this very letter: "You look with the eyes and speak with the language of friendship, when you make my life of much more concern to the world than your own. I take it, as it is, for an effect of your kindness, and so shall not accuse you of compliment:

\* *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*. St. John of the Cross, Bk. II. ch. viii.

† *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. xix. § 5.

the mistakes and over-valuings of goodwill being always sincere, even when they exceed what common truth allows."

Then, again, Molyneux' brother, the doctor, wrote to Locke after William's death: "I could not believe that mortality could make so deep an impression on me whose profession leads into so thorough a familiarity with it; but I find a passionate affection surmounts all this, and the *tecum obeam lubens*, though it was the expression of a poet, yet I am sensible was a very natural one, when we love extremely."

So, in spite of its apotheosis of Reason, its chill contempt for a mere poet, the eighteenth century caught an occasional glimpse of Love as an instrument of knowledge, of apprehension in the wide sense; which is all that the Mystic claims; S. Bonaventura declared "*est animi extensio in Deum per amoris desiderium*."

Yet the Mystic does not make the opposite mistake, and exclude thought: "It is what we think about and what we love that matters most, and that makes us what we really are in God's eyes, as opposed to what we seem in the eyes of others," wrote Fr. Tyrrell.\*

And yet, in spite of the occasional glimpses, at other times, the eighteenth century seemed as if it would claim some sort of rationalist domination over heaven itself. "Were an angel of heaven to justify a truth with virulence and heat, he would not prevail;" so wrote William Molyneux to Locke on June 6, 1696, forgetting perhaps that heat and virulence are not identical; that the prince of the celestial armies contended, if he dared bring no railing accusation, forgetting too the authoritative declaration, *regnum cælorum vim patitur, et violenti rapiunt illud*.

Locke maintained, as was mentioned before, that even

\* *Hard Sayings*, by George Tyrrell, S.J., p. 18.



Revelation must be judged by Reason. What he meant precisely he scarcely makes clear. He writes: "Reason must be our last judge and guide in everything. I do not mean that we must consult reason, and examine whether a proposition revealed from God can be made out by natural principles, and if it cannot that then we may reject it; but consult it we must, and by it examine whether it be a revelation from God, or no; and if reason finds it to be revealed from God, reason then declares for it, as much as for any other truth, and makes it one of her dictates." \*

What the precise value of the difference between the second half of the sentence and the first is, or how Reason is to "find" a truth to be revealed from God, it might puzzle a man to explain. Certainly Locke left the enigma unsolved. It is quite true that he brings in "Scripture," in the very last paragraph of the chapter, brings it in to assist Reason. But he seems as unaware there that interpretations of Scripture may differ as he is in the previous paragraph that the vaunted "senses" may be occasionally misled.

His treatment of "Faith" does not help the difficulty materially. It is true that he protests that Faith and Reason should have distinct provinces, an arrangement which could solve the problem. But he seems unable to adhere to his own plan, for he writes: "Whatever God hath revealed is certainly true; no doubt can be made of it. This is the proper object of faith; but whether it be a divine revelation, or no; reason must judge." †

He does not lack boldness in his assertions: "God when He makes the prophet does not unmake the man; He leaves all his faculties in the natural state, to enable him to judge of his inspirations, whether they be of

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. xix. § 14.

† *Ibid.* IV. xviii. § 30.

divine original or no. When He illuminates the mind with supernatural light, He does not extinguish that which is natural." \*

No doubt, prophets were uncommon in England of the eighteenth century. No doubt, it would have been useless to invite Locke to consider, even for Psychology's advantage, the mystics and saints of the Church. But he admitted Scripture as "evidence;" and his theory of a prophet would be difficult to square with Jeremiah or Ezekiel, with St. Paul, whom he misquotes (for after all there is a philosophical difference between what *can* be described, and what it is *lawful* to describe †), or with St. John the Divine.

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. xix. § 14.

† *Ibid.* IV. xviii. § 3.

## CHAPTER V

### LOCKE'S PSYCHOLOGY

IT is impossible to understand Locke's contribution to English Pedagogy, without some study of his philosophy. The *Essay on the Human Understanding* is a psychological, not a metaphysical treatise; he is not inquiring into the origin of things, but into the development of the understanding of man, into its way of working. To this task, he brings all the extreme seriousness, the penetrating love of truth which appeared in his letters to Molyneux. That his mood was the same in both, we may gather from his *Epistle to the Reader*, prefixed to the *Essay*, in which he writes: "it is truth alone I seek, and that will always be welcome to me when and from whomsoever it comes." But he was bent on finding out for himself, so to speak. As he tells us, in the same *Epistle*, he was a man who "has raised himself above the alms-basket, and not content to live lazily on scraps of begged opinion, sets his own thoughts to work, to find and follow truth." Yet, by this sentence, must be put that other already quoted, from one of his letters: "I am not fond of anything in my book, because I have once thought or said it." The origin, the provoking cause of the *Essay*, he described in the *Epistle*: "Were it fit to trouble thee with the history of this *Essay*, I should tell thee, that five or six friends meeting at my chamber, and discoursing on a subject very remote from this, found

themselves quickly at a stand, by the difficulties that rose on every side. After we had awhile puzzled ourselves, without coming any nearer a resolution of those doubts which perplexed us, it came into my thoughts that we took a wrong course ; and that before we set ourselves on inquiries of that nature, it was necessary to examine our own abilities, and see what objects our understandings were or were not fitted to deal with."

It is obvious that any one who could give an adequate answer to the last question must have a thorough knowledge of the constitution of human understanding—in other words, of Psychology.

In this *Epistle*, Locke notes another matter of importance : " in an age which produces such masters as the great Huygenius, and the incomparable Mr. Newton, with some others of that strain, it is ambition enough to be employed as an under labourer in clearing the ground a little, and removing some of the rubbish that lies in the way to knowledge, which had certainly been very much more advanced in the world, if the endeavours of ingenious and industrious men had not been much cumbered with the learned but frivolous use of uncouth, affected or unintelligible terms, introduced into the Sciences, and then made an art to that degree, that philosophy, which is nothing but the true knowledge of things, was thought unfit, or incapable to be brought into well-bred company and polite conversation. Vague and insignificant forms of speech and abuse of language have so long passed for mysteries of science ; and hard or misapplied words, with little or no meaning, have, by prescription, such a right to be mistaken for deep learning and height of speculation, that it will not be easy to persuade, either those who speak, or those who hear them, that they are but the covers of ignorance, and hinderance of true knowledge."

Probably, Locke's reference is to Scholastic Philosophy. Yet, had he taken the trouble really to study it, it seems unlikely that he would have poured quite this scorn on its terminology and nomenclature, since it is surely a platitude that the language of the great Schoolmen was singularly distinguished by precise, delicate, subtle accuracy: rather, he might have agreed with Fr. Joseph Rickaby, S.J., that its decay, so far as that occurred, was due to its exaggeration of a *priorism*.

However that may be, Locke's was a tremendously bold step; to discuss philosophy in the language of the market-place, was a far greater departure from custom than Ascham's, when he essayed to write a pedagogic treatise in his mother tongue. Though no doubt Locke succeeded to a marked degree, yet an occasional ambiguity of meaning was probably the quite natural issue of his attempt.

The first two books of the *Essay* are the most purely psychological. Locke makes it plain from the outset that he does not propose to trouble himself about a physiological basis. Doubtless he was competent to go as far in that direction as the undeveloped science of his age permitted, for, earlier in life, he had pursued medical studies. "But," so he writes, "these are speculations, which however curious and entertaining, I shall decline, as lying out of my way, in the design I am now on." The first book deals mainly with his famous attack on innate ideas; the second discusses the genesis of human knowledge.

Locke has been accused of destroying a doctrine which no one ever maintained. His clearest statement of the problem occurs in the following passage: "It is an established principle among some men that there are in the understanding certain innate principles; some primary notions. *Kovai êvroi*, characters as it were stamped upon

the mind of man, which the soul receives in its very first being, and brings into the world with it." \*

This has been regarded as a direct, deliberate attack upon Descartes. In the *Introduction*, he had defined the word "idea" as being that term "which, I think, serves best to stand for whatsoever is the object of the understanding when a man thinks." † Then, in the first chapter of the first book, he uses the words principles, truths, notions, ideas, as if they were all exactly synonymous. If, all alike, they are to be taken to mean "whatever is the object of understanding when a man thinks," it is safe to say that neither Descartes nor any other philosopher ever held a theory of innate ideas.

If we inquire next what Locke meant by innate, he replies, definitely enough in the phrase, "characters as it were stamped upon the mind of man, which the soul receives in its very first being, and brings into the world with it." Again, it is doubtful whether any philosopher, who maintained the doctrine, ever meant quite that by innate. Professor Veitch declared that "by innate ideas, Descartes meant merely a mental modification, which, existing in the mind antecedently to all experience, possesses, however, only a *potential* existence, until, on occasion of experience, it is called forth into actual consciousness." Thus much it would seem that Locke too admits, *e.g.* in the following passage: "I deny not that there are natural tendencies imprinted on the minds of men; and that from the very first instances of sense and perception, there are some things that are grateful, and others unwelcome to them, some things that they incline to, and others that they fly." ‡

He goes further and gives a concrete instance: "Nature,

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, I. ii. § 1.

† *Ibid.*, Introduction, § 8.

‡ *Ibid.* I. ii. § 3:

I confess, has put into man a desire of happiness and an aversion to misery: these, indeed, are innate practical principles which (as practical principles ought) do continue constantly to operate and influence all our actions without ceasing." \*

How he reconciled these statements with those he had made earlier does not appear plainly. Locke's pupil, Shaftesbury, declared that "Innate is a word Mr. Locke poorly played on." The real point, as he went on to argue, is not when the hypothetical innate knowledge dawned, whether before or at the moment of birth, but "whether the constitution of man be such, that being adult and grown up, the ideas of rational order and administration of a God will not infallibly and necessarily spring up in him."

It was Dr. Sidgwick who hit on the key of the position. Writing of Locke, he said, that his "ethical opinions have been widely misunderstood, since from a confusion between 'innate ideas' and intuitions which has been common in recent ethical discussion, it has been supposed that the founder of English empiricism must necessarily have been hostile to intuitional ethics." †

Now, no one can read the Fourth Book of the *Essay* with anything like attention and an open mind, and deny that Locke allowed man's possession of the power of intuition. Probably, he lets intuition play a larger part in Ethics than in Psychology, but he admits its place in all intellectual activity, e.g. "if we will reflect on our own ways of thinking, we shall find that sometimes the mind perceives the agreement and disagreement of two ideas, immediately by themselves, without the intervention of any other; and this, I think we may call intuitive

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, I. iii. § 3.

† *History of Ethics*, H. Sidgwick, p. 172.

knowledge."\* He goes further and declares that "this kind of knowledge is the clearest and most certain that human frailty is capable of." He calls it "irresistible," comparing it, in one passage, to "bright sunshine." This intuitive knowledge is not, of course, identical with that which he described in the first chapter, as "characters stamped upon the mind of man, which the soul receives in its very first being, and brings into the world with it," but is quite compatible with "the natural tendencies imprinted on the minds of men," of which he has spoken as tendencies according to which we *must* think, when our senses yield us impressions. It is perhaps as well to recall in this connexion a passage already quoted: "Some of the ideas that are in the mind are so there that they can be by themselves immediately compared one with another; and in these the mind is able to perceive that they agree or disagree, as clearly as that it has them. Thus the mind perceives that the arc of a circle is less than the whole circle, as clearly as it does the idea of a circle; and this therefore, as has been said, I call intuitive knowledge, which is certain, beyond all doubt, and needs no probation nor can have any; this being the highest of all human certainty. In this consists the evidence of all those maxims which nobody has any doubt about, but every man (does not, as is said, only assent to, but) knows to be true, as soon as ever they are proposed to his understanding. In the discovery of and assent to these truths, there is no use of the discursive faculty, no need of reasoning, but they are known by a superior and higher degree of evidence. And such, if I may guess at things unknown, I am apt to think that angels have now, and the spirits of just men made perfect shall have, in a future state, of thousands of things, which now either wholly escape our apprehension, or which our shortsighted reason

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. ii. § 1.



having got some faint glimpse of, we, in the dark, grope after.' \*

Probably Locke made his pungent attack on the theory of innate ideas, because he had, in the back of his mind, a slightly different *bête noir*, viz. the practice of accepting any principle or idea, as he would say "merely on authority." That he occasionally confused innate ideas with unquestioned acceptance of authority is plainly indicated by the following passage: "When men have found some general propositions that could not be doubted of as soon as understood, it was, I know, a short and easy way, to conclude them innate. This being once received, it eased the lazy from the pains of search, and stopped the inquiry of the doubtful, concerning all that was once styled innate; and it was of no small advantage to those who affected to be masters and teachers, to make this the principle of principles, that 'principles must not be questioned;' for having once established this tenet, that there are innate principles, it put their followers upon the necessity of receiving some doctrines as such; which was to take them off from their own reason and judgment, and put them upon believing them and taking them upon trust, without farther examination: in which posture of blind credulity, they might be more easily governed by and made useful to, some sort of men, who had the skill and office to principle and guide them. Nor is it a small power he gives one man over another, to have the authority to be the dictator of principles and teacher of unquestionable truths, and to make a man swallow that for an innate principle, which may serve to his purpose who teacheth them. Whereas, had they examined the ways whereby men came by the knowledge of many universal truths, they would have found them to result in the minds of men from the being of the things

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. xvii. § 14.

themselves when duly considered; and that they were discovered by the application of those faculties that were fitted by nature to receive and judge of them, when duly employed about them." \*

This concluding sentence proves, beyond any shadow of doubt, that Locke believed the human mind to possess "faculties fitted by nature" to "receive and judge phenomena."

It is interesting to find that in that *Journal* which he kept during his stay in France from November 1675, to May 1679—a *Journal* wherein are to be found some of his most private reflections—in a soliloquy entitled *Knowledge its Extent and Measure*, Locke wrote: "We shall find that we are sent out into the world furnished with those faculties which are fit to obtain knowledge, and knowledge sufficient, if we will but confine it within these purposes, and direct it to those ends, which the constitution of our nature, and the circumstance of our being, point out to us." †

Locke's general psychological position then seems to be that the individual's knowledge will depend on two conditions; (a) the circumstances of his environment, and (b) his inherited tendencies developed by experience; that knowledge issues from the working up of the manifold of sense by reflection. Yet, it must be conceded, that though he acknowledges the existence of these tendencies, and though, in the later part of the *Essay*, he expressly admits intuitive knowledge, yet his own personal bias, increased by the particular atmosphere of philosophic speculation just then, inclined him towards an excessive emphasis on experience: he must be reckoned amongst the empiricists, though not amongst the most rigid portion of them. This seems the best place to note his appreciation of the fact,

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, I. iv. § 24.

† *Life of Locke*, by Lord King, vol. i. p. 162.

the psychological fact, of *individuality*, the quality which clearly differentiates one human being from another: "It being past doubt then, that allowance is to be made for the temper and strength of our bodies, and that our health is to regulate the measure of our studies, the great secret is to find out the proportion; the difficulty whereof lies in this, that it must not only be varied according to the constitution and strength of every individual man, but it must also change with the temper, vigour, and circumstance and health of every particular man, in the different varieties of health or indisposition of body, which everything our bodies have any commerce with is able to alter; so that it is as hard to say how many hours a day a man shall study constantly, as to say how much meat he shall eat every day, wherein, his own prudence, governed by the present circumstances, can only judge. . . . The mind has sympathies and antipathies as well as the body; it has a natural preference often of one study before another." \*

Obviously, this clear appreciation of idiosyncrasy must tinge his educational theory.

In the Second Book of the *Essay*, Locke deals with the difficult problem of the genesis of human knowledge. He adopts the old, and to a great extent misleading, figure of the *tabula rasa*, to denote or represent the human mind: "Let us then suppose the mind to be, as we say, white paper, void of all characters, without any ideas; how comes it to be furnished? . . . Whence has it all the materials of reason and knowledge? To this I answer in one word, from experience; in that all our knowledge is founded; and from that it ultimately derives itself." † He then goes on to argue that the two fountains of our knowledge are *sensation* and *reflection*: "Let any one

\* *Of Study*. *Life of Locke*, by Lord King, vol. i. pp. 183, 185.

† *Essay on the Human Understanding*, II. i. § 2.

examine his own thoughts, and thoroughly search into his understanding, and then let him tell me, whether all the original ideas he has there are any other than of the objects of his senses, or of the operations of his mind, considered as objects of his reflection ; and how great a mass of knowledge soever he imagines to be lodged there, he will, upon a strict view, see that he has not any idea in his mind, but what one of these two have imprinted." \*

But sweepingly comprehensive of all our knowledge as these uncompromising sentences seem to be, Locke did, as a matter of fact, make exceptions, and also add other ways and means. Without precisely analysing the exact nature of "self-consciousness," he removes it from the sphere of sensation, and from that of reflection upon sensation. In his *Miscellaneous Papers* there occurs a Fragment called *Of Ethics in General*. Therein, he criticises Descartes' *Proof of the Existence of God* ; and he writes : "The real existence of other things without us can be evidenced to us only by our senses ; but our own existence is known to us by a certainty yet higher than our senses can give us of the existence of other things, and that is internal perception, a self-consciousness, or intuition ; from whence, therefore, may be drawn, by a train of ideas, the surest and most incontestable proof of the existence of God." †

This Locke asserts emphatically in the Fourth Book of the *Essay upon Human Understanding*, ch. x. § 2 ; while, the first words of the next chapter are "The Knowledge of our own being we have by intuition." ‡ But he departs still further in Book iv., from those two fountains of all our knowledge which he unsealed in Book ii. In his famous "proof" of the existence of God, he rests not upon sensation,

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, II. i. § 5.

† *Life of Locke*, by Lord King, vol. ii. pp. 138, 139.

‡ *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. xi. § 1.

nor upon reflexion about sensation, but upon *intuition*. His proof can be sufficiently reproduced here in five condensed propositions and a quotation or two.\* He argues that—

(1) A man knows intuitively that he himself is something.

(2) "Man knows by an intuitive certainty that bare nothing can no more produce any real being than it can be equal to two right angles . . . it is an evident demonstration that from eternity there has been something."

(3) A man finds in himself power which must be derived from a powerful source.

(4) A man finds in himself perception, therefore there must be a source of knowing.

From these intuitively known propositions (as he states them to be), Locke proceeds to the fifth, which is the conclusion of his "proof."

(5) "Thus from the consideration of ourselves, and what we infallibly find in our own constitutions, our reason leads us to the knowledge of this certain and evident truth, that there is an eternal, most powerful, and most knowing Being; which, whether any will please to call God, it matters not."

It is evident, from such passages as these, that Locke cannot be reckoned without serious qualification as a member of the Sensationalist School of Psychology. Yet, he gave to sensation a very high place, though one hesitates to call it a higher place than that which he assigns to intuitive knowledge of self, when one remembers his scathing observation. "He that can doubt, whether he be anything or no, I speak not to; no more than I would argue with pure nothing, or endeavour to convince non-entity that it were something. If any one pretends to be so sceptical as to

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. x. §§ 2-6.

deny his own existence (for really to doubt of it is manifestly impossible), let him for me enjoy his beloved happiness of being nothing, until hunger or some other pain convince him of the contrary. This, then, I think, I may take for a truth, which every one's certain knowledge assures him of beyond the liberty of doubting, viz. that he is something that actually exists." \*

Indeed, one may well hesitate to dogmatise at all about the relative values which Locke set on sensational and intuitive knowledge when one finds him practically contradicting himself in one and the self-same paragraph.

"From what has been said, it is plain to me we have a more certain knowledge of the existence of God than of anything our senses have not immediately discovered to us. Nay, I presume I may say that we may more certainly know that there is a God, than that there is anything else without us." †

A thinker who is as satisfied of his own existence as Cardinal Newman was, ‡ and equally convinced of God's existence, may still be left in doubt as to what Locke intended his final position to be. Did he, or did he not, think sense-knowledge superior to intuition? He leaves the point theoretically obscure. But, and perhaps this is the really interesting point to the student of pedagogy, in practice, and especially in the practice of education, he attached most importance to sense-knowledge, and to a highly individualised form of it. It is quite true that he coupled reflection with "sense," that he treated them as

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. x. § 2.

† *Ibid.* IV. x. § 6.

‡ "If I may not assume that I exist, and in a particular way, that is with a particular mental constitution, I have nothing to speculate about, and had better let speculation alone. . . . I am what I am, or I am nothing. . . . If I do not use myself, I have no other self to use." *Grammar of Assent*, ch. ix. § 1.

the two main sources of human knowledge ; but, in practice the prime place is surely given to sense : " In the reception of simple ideas, the understanding is for the most part passive. . . . These simple ideas when offered to the mind the understanding can no more refuse to have, nor alter when they are imprinted, nor blot them out and make new ones itself, than a mirror can refuse, alter, or obliterate the images or ideas, which the objects set before it do therein produce. As the bodies that surround us do diversely affect our organs, the mind is forced to receive the impressions, and cannot avoid the perception of those ideas that are annexed to them." \*

Perhaps the people who frequent Courts of Law, Judges, Counsel, and Juries, would be as good witnesses as could be found against this "reflecting mirror theory" of the human mind. If our minds did as little as mirrors the administration of law would be only one though a conspicuous department of life where the despatch of business would be facilitated and quickened. Happy instances against Locke's view might be found in Election Addresses, and in the House of Commons itself ; even the ingenious child endeavouring to evade its pedagogue would not fail entirely to furnish similar evidence. Locke insists, if one may say so, on individual sense-perception ; every person is to be responsible for his own sense-perception, a proviso which in itself indicates the unsatisfactoriness of the mirror theory of the mind ; he writes : " Knowing is seeing ; and if it be so, it is madness to persuade ourselves we do so by another man's eyes, let him use ever so many words to tell us that what he asserts is very visible. Till we ourselves see it with all our own eyes and perceive it by our own understandings, we are as much in the dark, and as void of knowledge as before, let us believe any learned

\* *Essay on Human Understanding*, II. i. § 25.

author as much as we will." \* This passage is meant more or less to refer to adults ; when he came to the actual business of educating children, though he still emphasised the paramount importance of sense-impressions and clear images thereabout, Locke allowed some little scope to the instructor in guiding towards their acquisition. The child may not, must not see with the pedagogue's eye, but at least Locke allows the maturer person to invite, to guide, even to show youth how, to use its own. Writing from Oates, on March 30, 1696, to the anxious Molyneux, he said, "The first step towards knowledge is to have clear and distinct ideas ; which I have just reason, every day more and more to think few men ever have, or think themselves, to want ; which is one great cause of that infinite jargon and nonsense, which so pesters the world. You have a good subject to work on ; and, therefore, pray let this be your chief care, to fill your son's head with clear and distinct ideas, and teach him, on all occasions, both by practice and rule, how to get them, and the necessity of it. This, together with a mind active and set upon the attainment of reputation and truth, is the true principling of a young man. But to give him a reverence for our opinions, before we taught them, is not to make knowing men, but prattling parrots. I beg your pardon for this liberty ; it is an expression of good-will, and not the less so, because not within the precise forms of good breeding."

But in the highest interests of education, whose whole trend depends upon the answer, it may well be asked, in rather a graver strain than above, whether in this, quite legitimate, desire—since fog is always misleading and bewildering—to get clear impressions, Locke has not exaggerated mental passivity.

First of all, he attributes that passivity to the stuff of

\* *Conduct of the Understanding*, § 24.



the mind, when he compares it (in the passage quoted above) to a mirror ; and declares that the mind can no more refuse or alter an impression than can a mirror. This is an improvement, no doubt, on the "characterless bare soul," which Herbart will presently offer to the human race : but surely Locke's surmise errs, if less than Herbart's, always on the side of meagreness.

Suppose the same object could be placed in front of two mirrors so that sameness of condition, light, position, and so forth were secured, would the two reflections differ ? If they did, surely one or the other mirror must have "rejected" or "altered" the imprint of the object. But what we call the same object when presented under like conditions to two (or more) human minds, does not produce the same impression. No two people will give identical accounts of a complicated event which both have witnessed, *unless they have colluded* ; it will be remembered that "critical" scholars who impeached the veracity of the Gospels on the ground of variations in the narratives, were attacked at once by the psychologically minded, who contended that an element of variety is essential to reliability. Again, if two people set out to sketch the same prospect, the two sketches will differ materially from each other, perhaps also from the recollection of a third to whom the pictures are shown ; and this not only through inequalities of technique, because one could select a pair of equally gifted artists, nor because their eyes differ, for an oculist could be brought in to choose two of equally good sight, but—what is left ?—surely because their minds are not equal and cannot, by any yet known process, be equalised. A somewhat singular but relevant instance of variety in so-called perception occurred not long ago. Two Englishwomen, educated (and at any rate anxious to be truthful) by the courtesy of a *gardien* visited Chartres Cathedral, with

which they were well acquainted by day, after sunset and moonrise. The interior was one huge mass of shadows, save in the southern ambulatory of the choir where, right opposite to the window, long beloved by the Chartrains, called Notre-Dame de la Belle Verrière, a full moon flooded its radiance through the effulgent blue, and our Lady shone forth, "*pulchra ut luna*," upon the dim twilight of her great Church. Naturally, and the point is significant, the northern ambulatory was densely shadowed. Comparing notes after, it happened, *à propos* of a difference of opinion (a comparison, in fact, from one particular point of view, of the Cathedrals of Chartres and Amiens), that one of them was convinced that *no* candles were alight, and the other that some candles were burning, at that particular time around the shrine of Notre-Dame du Pilier, situated of course in the northern, at the moment heavily shadowed, ambulatory. As a matter of fact, as it is not even necessary to say, much less to argue, they cannot have been simultaneously alight and not alight.

What was the truth the writer has no doubt: indubitably some were alight, though there were fewer than during the populous hours of the day. The psychological interest lies in the fact that the same "presentation" (invested with a certain interest by previous difference of opinion) was totally different to two people, both educated, both equally anxious to tell the truth, but differing certainly not only in previous training, and in what might be called the previous furniture of the mind, but also in those far more elusive, but surely real, elements, temperament and taste. The quota of the mind! Is it, after all, a less passive entity, harder to be reckoned with than Locke allowed; a matter not wholly of environment, of previous presentations already apperceived, but far more of that unanalysed, perhaps unanalysable quality, called "*bent*." —Take an

example from among children, and an instance common enough, seeing the persistence and frequency with which that youthful attention seems to be directed to that period of our history called "the Stuart." Two of the same family are brought up in the same place, by the same people, nurtured on the same text-books, and one turns out a furious Puritan, the other a fierce adherent of ill-fated Charles. Moreover, the dividing line of—what will you call it if not *mind*,—which that fact is but an instance and example, parts their whole attitude to things all their lives through; best of friends though they may remain, springing from the same stock, educated together, and yet "seeing things" wholly unlike.

Again, Locke scarcely seems to have thought how great a factor in the manufacture of knowledge is the distribution of attention. Any modern Manual of Psychology will insist upon and demonstrate the fact, which, when we think about it we all find we know, that, as a matter of fact, the mind can attend to this, reject that, give a partial notice to something else: and we all know how different is the knowledge in amount and kind, acquired under these three conditions.

And lastly, Locke, living in pre-Herbartian days, had an imperfect idea of the process of apperception; for of course the thing existed long before it received its untoward title. Of its true significance and importance in education, he seems to have been imperfectly aware. But, in spite of that, he laid great stress—no real teacher could do otherwise—on the most important of the Herbartian "Five steps," that process with which no teacher, not Herbart nor another, can ever dispense, nor even allow himself to handle lightly or unadvisedly—presentation.

In his *Epistle to the Reader*, prefixed to the *Essay on the Human Understanding*, he set forth the theory of

presentation in phrases which perhaps no succeeding writer has bettered :—" There are few I believe who have not observed in themselves or others that what in one way of proposing was very obscure, another way of expressing it has made very clear and intelligible ; though afterward the mind found very little difference in the phrases, and wondered why one failed to be understood more than the other. But everything does not hit alike upon every man's imagination. We have our understandings no less different than our palates, and he that thinks that the same truth shall be equally relished by every one in the same dress, may as well hope to feast every one with the same sort of cookery ; the meat may be the same and the nourishment good, yet not every one be able to receive it with that seasoning, and it must be dressed another way, if you will have it go down with some, even of strong constitution."

Apparently, the mind is not so " passive " after all.

At first, when he deals with intuitive knowledge, Locke seems inclined to restrict it to a man's consciousness of his own existence. But he very soon enlarges the scope of his borders, and admits that which we might call another class of intuitive knowledge :—" Sometimes the mind perceives the agreement or disagreement of two ideas immediately, by themselves, without the intervention of any other ; and this, I think, we may call intuitive knowledge. For in this the mind is at no pains in proving or examining, but perceives the truth, as the eye doth light, only by being directed towards it. Thus the mind perceives that white is not black, that a circle is not a triangle, that three are more than two, and equal to one and two. Such kind of truths the mind perceives at the first sight of the ideas together, by bare intuition, without the intervention of any other idea : and this kind of knowledge is the clearest and most certain that human frailty is capable

of. This part of knowledge is irresistible, and like bright sunshine, forces itself immediately to be perceived, as soon as ever the mind turns its view that way; and leaves no room for hesitation, doubt or examination, but the mind is presently filled with the clear light of it." \*

But demonstration proceeds in those cases where it is impossible, as Locke says, to juxtapose two ideas immediately; then we must have recourse to intervening ideas, "one or more as it happens," and "this," he remarks, "is what we call reasoning." His illustration is mathematical. The mind, as he says, being unable to compare directly two right angles, and the angles of a triangle, yet desires to know their relation in size to one another:—"In this case, the mind is fain to find out some other angles to which the three angles of a triangle have an equality, and finding those equal to two right angles, comes to know their equality to two right ones." †

But even if, in the Fourth Book, Locke does modify the part which he had, in the first two Books, assigned to sensation in the genesis of human knowledge, yet still stress is laid on what one might call observation as contrasted with reasoning. Thus, in the twelfth chapter, where he discusses ways and means of improving knowledge, he pleads that the best way lies not in deduction from principles already accepted, as in pure mathematics, but by *comparison of clear and distinct ideas*. And when he uses the term *ideas* thus, he has in mind less "whatsoever is the object of understanding when a man thinks,"—which covers the most abstract imaginable conception—than mental images of what was once at any rate a concrete perception. His objection to proceeding deductively is conveyed in an elaboration of a very important

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. ii. § 1.

† *Ibid.* IV. ii. § 2.

statement, which he seemed to drop casually in chapter seven, and there to leave:—"the mind begins its knowledge in particulars, and thence gradually enlarges it to more general ideas." He returns to this point (which should be suggestive to those who argue that the teacher should always "proceed from the simple to the complex") in the twelfth chapter:—"I desire any one to consider which is known first and clearest by most people, the particular instance or the general rule."

If Locke be right in his contention that we know the particular *first*, we certainly do not "proceed from the simple to the complex," for it is a commonplace of logic that the connotation of an individual term is greater than the connotation of the general. A general notion of a class must shed off individual attributes, because the class description is arrived at by a summation of the likenesses distinguishing the members of a class, a generality against which every individual idiosyncrasy militates fatally. For example, take the class *cat*. It is difficult perhaps to settle exactly what constitutes "cattiness." I may suggest the capacity to purr, which surely appertains to all the cats, big and little, and to no other animals; and secondly, their peculiar gait; as it has been said, "a cat moves all in one piece." But if the passage be made from cats in general to a particular cat, then, as the class reference, the denotation, drops to one, the individual properties, the connotation, rises indefinitely. For instance, the writer knew a cat who invariably refused to come in from his evening stroll till two or three minutes after the gas inside the fanlight over his own hall door was extinguished. Apparently he watched it, refusing to curtail his pleasure unnecessarily soon, yet disinclined to keep his family up more than those two or three minutes after they showed a desire to go to bed. It was a habit which grew into a definite

characteristic of that cat : it was akin to the extraordinary methodicalness of the great philosopher, Kant. By this trivial but I hope lucid instance, it is shown then that though Locke may be right that we know the individual before the general ; yet, if he be, what we know first is far more highly complex than that which we know last. It is, of course, open to argument that we do not at first sight recognise the full complexity of the individual. Probably our complete recognition of the individual, of the class, of the distinctions between them, is a long, highly elaborate, to-and-fro movement.

Locke is successful in shewing the process by which we can gain knowledge by comparison of clear and distinct ideas, by choosing an example which the mathematician would deduce from principles. It has been suggested already that Locke brought philosophy home to men's business and bosoms, by deliberately using the plain language of everyday life. But he added much to this clarity of expression, by his familiar and yet excellently apposite illustrations : *e.g.* " Cannot a country wench know, that having received a shilling from one who owes her three, and a shilling also from another that owes her three, the remaining debts in each of their hands are equal ? Cannot she know this, I say, unless she fetch the certainty of it from this maxim, that if you take equals from equals, the remainder will be equal ? a maxim which possibly she never heard or thought of." \* And similarly he insists again : " The way to improve knowledge is not, I am sure, blindly and with an implicit faith to receive and swallow principles ; but is, I think, to get and fix in our minds clear, distinct and complete ideas, as far as they are to be had, and annex to them proper and constant names." †

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. xii. § 3:

† *Ibid.* IV. xii. § 6.

Concerning the operation of the Will in the manufacture of knowledge out of the "manifold of sense," Locke writes in two different senses, in this Fourth Book. He first delivers himself of a psychological judgment: "All that is voluntary in our knowledge is the employing or withholding, any of our faculties, from this or that sort of objects, and a more or less accurate survey of them; but they, being employed, our will hath no power to determine the knowledge of the mind, one way or other, that is done only by the objects themselves, as far as they are clearly discovered."

But then, later, he takes account of a complicating moral, or would he consider it immoral factor in will? viz. the entrance of desire or aversion: "*Quod volumus, facile credimus*; what suits our wishes is forwardly believed; is, I suppose, what every one hath more than once experimented: and though men cannot always openly gainsay or resist the force of manifest probabilities that make against them, yet yield they not to the argument. Not but that it is the nature of the understanding constantly to close with the more probable side, but yet a man hath a power to suspend and restrain its inquiries, and not permit a full and satisfactory examination as far as the matter in question is capable, and will bear it to be made." \*

It may be interesting here to compare a few sentences from the writings of a very different person, Dom Lorenzo Scupoli, Clerk Regular of the Theatine Order, who died nearly eighty years before Locke published the *Essay on the Human Understanding*. For, after all, if Psychology is to come to its highest perfection, it must avoid one-sidedness: it should not weigh evidence, experience, opinion all of one sort, all carefully selected from one school of thought. Sharp contrasts of human speculation may afford fruitful

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. xiii. § 2.

† *Ibid.* IV. xx. § 12.



results. Some of us need to clear our minds of pre-conceptions of what is "possible" or "impossible," and our speech from those fatal phrases "it *must* be," "it *cannot* be."

In the eighth chapter of the *Spiritual Combat*, the chapter headed "Right Judgment," Scupoli warns his readers as follows: "The cause why the above-named beings \* with many others are not discerned by us aright is that at their first appearance we attach to them either love or hatred; by which the understanding being darkened, it does not rightly judge what they are. . . .

"If the will is first drawn to love the thing or holds it in abhorrence, the understanding cannot well know it, because the affection which it has placed between darkens it in such a way that it thinks it other than it really is, and representing it thus to the will is moved more boldly than before to love it or to hate it against all the orders and laws of reason. . . .

"And, therefore, if the rule that I have given is not kept—and it is of the first importance in all this practice—these two powers, the understanding and the will, so noble and excellent in themselves, will always be going round and round as it were from darkness into deeper darkness, and from error into more serious error."

Locke once wrote to Molyneux (September 20, 1692): "I am so sincere a lover of truth that it is very indifferent to me, so I am possessed of it, whether it be my own, or any other's discovery;" so, naturally, he would have accepted it from Scupoli or any one else, had it appealed to him as being "truth."

Those who remember the use which Cardinal Newman in his *Grammar of Assent* † made of the "Illative Sense," will be interested to find Locke insisting, after all his pleas

\* *I.e.* honours, possessions, mundane interests generally.

† *Grammar of Assent*, J. H. Newman, ch. ix.

for "Sense," on the necessary place and function of "illation": "What need is there of reason? Very much: both for the enlargement of our knowledge, and regulating our assent: for it hath to do both in knowledge and opinion, and is necessary and assisting to all our other intellectual faculties, and indeed contains two of them, sagacity and illation. By the one, it finds out; and, by the other, it so orders the intermediate ideas, as to discover what connexion there is in each link of the chain, whereby the extremes are held together; and, thereby, as it were, to draw into view the truth sought for, which is that which we call illation or inference, and consists in nothing but the perception of the connexion there is between the ideas in each step of the deduction, whereby the mind comes to see either the certain agreement or disagreement of any two ideas, as of demonstration, in which it arrives at knowledge; or their probable connexion, on which it gives or withholds its assent as in opinion. Sense and intuition reach but a very little way. The greatest part of knowledge depends upon deductions and intermediate ideas; and in those cases where we are fain to substitute assent instead of knowledge, and take propositions for true, without being sure that they are so, we have need to find out, examine and compare the grounds of their probability. In both these cases, the faculty which finds out the means, and rightly applies them to discover certainty in the one and probability in the other, is that which we call reason." \*

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. xvii. § 2;

## CHAPTER VI

### LOCKE ON EDUCATION

LOCKE'S insistence on the fact that "the mind begins its knowledge in particulars"; that the way of knowledge lies along the comparison of clear and distinct ideas, to which ideas proper and constant names should be attached; his plea that Will must be exerted if we desire knowledge; combined with his claim concerning the importance of the "illative sense" conveyed in that startling admission quoted at the close of the preceding chapter, "Sense and intuition reach but a very little way. The greatest part of knowledge depends upon deductions and intermediate ideas," all that should prepare us to find, what, as a matter of fact, we do find, in his pedagogic treatises, viz. a far greater care for the development of the pupils' powers, than for any perfection of imparted instruction.

Here, pre-eminently, Locke has counsel to offer to the present time. In our restless anxiety to teach all, whether they be fit or no, whether they be willing or no, we reduce ourselves too often to a system of barren, dull, fact-imparting. While we insist on instructing all, and that *cheaply*, it cannot very well be otherwise. The improvement of natural ability, the development of the illative sense, of judgment, the cultivation of will ask for specialised effort, for that kind of individualising of which Vittorino da Feltre was capable, for that kindling devotion to little children

which burned in Saint-Cyran. This sort of training cannot be given by just anybody to whom the duty is delegated at random, nor even by any one specially and carefully selected to a mass of human creatures in the same time and place. The modern hurry and fuss and clamour for tangible results are the deadly foes of any sound training, though not of that jug-to-mug instruction which seems to satisfy some : a sound basis demands time and individual care, for it is still as true as when the Son of Sirach first thought of it, that " the wisdom of a learned man cometh by opportunity of leisure." Perhaps, it is necessary nowadays to add, as a gloss, that leisure and idleness are not, never were, synonymous.

If any one will argue, as Comenius did in all solemn seriousness, that it is possible to teach all men all things all at once, let us answer that in that lengthy treatise of his, in spite of all his rash promises at the outset, he never succeeded in shewing us how to do it. Again, if any one will remind us of Erasmus, who traced the beginnings of his own love of learning to those blessed Festival Days when Alexander Hegius " taught the whole school," let us remember that Erasmuses and Hegiuses are both alike, rare birds ; and that of the ruck of that school we are not told that their " sparks " were kindled into flame even by the splendid blaze of the genius of a Hegius.

But it was not only because he sought for the natural principles of mental growth, and because he built his system of education upon a psychological basis that Locke cared more for training than for mere instruction. There was a moral impulse underlying his plea for it. That care for the Public Weal, that conviction that the educated man or woman is a failure unless he or she discharge worthily a citizen's duty, which have inspired every great educator before and after him, were ever present to Locke.

Plato, in the Sixth Book of the *Republic*, urged with irresistible force the intimate connexion, existing of necessity, between education and enlightened service of the State.

Lionardo Bruni, writing at the very beginning of the fifteenth century, and to a woman too, said, "All sources of profitable learning will in due proportion claim your study. None have more urgent claim than the subjects and authors which treat of religion and of our duties in the world."

When Margaret Ascham, after her husband's death, prepared his *Scolemaster* for publication, she referred to it as "such good as my husband was able to do and leave to the common weale."

Milton's fine phrase, often quoted as it is, can never be staled quite into commonplace: "I call therefore a complete and generous education that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously all the offices both private and public of peace and war."

Such are practically the views of all the great educators from Plato and Quintilian to Matthew Arnold; and among the rest we find Locke, as pointed and decisive as any of them: "The well educating of their Children is so much the Duty and Concern of Parents, and the Welfare and Prosperity of the Nation so much depends on it, that I would have every one lay it seriously to Heart; and after having well examin'd it and distinguish'd what Fancy, Custom, or Reason advises in the Case, set his helping Hand to promote everywhere that Way of Training up Youth, with Regard to their several Conditions, which is the easiest, shortest, and likeliest to produce virtuous, useful, and able Men in their distinct Callings; tho' that most to be taken care of is the Gentleman's Calling. For if those of that Rank are by their Education, once set right, they will quickly bring all the rest into Order." \*

\* The Epistle Dedicatory to the *Thoughts concerning Education*.

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In these so-called democratic days, exception may be taken to the closing words. But the age also prides itself on being scientific, on resting its judgments on observation and experiment. The wise thinker, therefore, will regard Locke's statement as neither proved nor disproved, since we cannot lay our hands on any time or place when his condition—that Gentlemen should by their education be once set right—has obtained with anything approaching universality.

His directly pedagogic treatises number five :—

- (1) *Some Thoughts concerning Education* ;
- (2) *Some Thoughts concerning Reading and Study for a Gentleman* ;
- (3) *Instruction for the Conduct of a Young Gentleman* ;
- (4) *Of Study* (originally written in the Journal Locke kept in France).
- (5) *The Conduct of the Understanding*.

Of these five, perhaps the first may be described as better known than it was twenty years ago : the fourth, which is of considerable interest, is little heeded, while the fifth, though widely neglected, is at least as of great value as the first ; some might think it of far more. Besides these, containing much elucidatory matter, are Locke's letters to and from Molyneux, written both before and after the publication of the *Thoughts concerning Education*.

The first letter in which Molyneux mentions the matter, and wherein he pleads for the production of such a book, which " will be of vast advantage to all mankind, as well as particularly to me, your entire friend," is dated March 2, 1692-3. Molyneux writes as if a treatise on education had never before been written, as if the work of Plato, Quintilian, of Vittorino da Feltre, of Ascham and Mulcaster, or Rabelais and Montaigne, or even of Milton, was unknown to him. Or it may be that the end of the seventeenth

and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries took "rationalism" as seriously as some people at the end of the nineteenth took the "scientific spirit"; and thought that to be valuable at all, a work on education must be written solely from the moment's *parti pris*. Whereas education is a matter not of a moment but of enduring time, maybe of eternity; therefore passing fashions of thought affect its fundamentals less than some observers admit. The reason which Molyneux adduced in support of his request may remind us of that blunt phrase of Locke in the *Conduct of the Understanding*: "Those methinks who by the industry and parts of their ancestors have been set free from a constant drudgery to their backs and bellies, should bestow some of their spare time on their heads." \* The ceremonious Irishman expressed it more gracefully; speaking of his only son "whom his Mother left to me very young," he said, "It has pleased God, by the liberal provisions of our ancestors, to free me from the toiling cares of providing a fortune for him; so that my whole study shall be to lay up a treasure of knowledge in his mind, for his happiness both in this life and the next." Locke replied, saying that the book, composed mainly of letters "writ out of Holland" to a friend, † had gone to the printer's; but that he could wish "that a sea between us did not hinder me from the advantage of this good office" (*i.e.* the verbal criticism of Molyneux). Locke continued: "I am not in my nature a lover of novelty nor contradiction: but my notions in this treatise have run me so far out of the common road and practice, that I could have been glad to have them allowed by so sober a judgment as yours, or stopped, if they had appeared unpracticable or extravagant, from going any farther."

Molyneux' reply in April, 1693, suggests what he was

\* § 7.

† *i.e.* to "Edward Clarke of Chipley, Esq."

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hoping for from Locke's fearless methods, as he evidently thought them: "I doubt not but that the work will be new and peculiar, as his other performances; and this it is that renders them estimable and pleasant. He that travels the beaten roads may chance, indeed, to have company; but he that takes his liberty and manages it with judgment is the man that makes useful discoveries and most beneficial to those that follow him. Had Columbus never ventured further than his predecessor, we had yet been ignorant of a vast part of our earth preferable (as some say) to all the other three. And if none may be allowed to try the ocean of philosophy farther than our ancestors, we shall have but little advancements or discoveries, made in the *mundus intellectualis*; wherein, I believe, there is much more unknown, than what we have yet found out."

A sober *via media* was this chosen delectable way of the eighteenth century. "He that takes his liberty and manages it with judgment;" possible enough to the few in every generation, but no road for the trampling herd. "He that will know the truth of things must leave the common beaten track," said Locke on that occasion when he ruled out of court the easy aphorism *vox populi vox Dei*, with his cold measure of experience, "yet I do not remember where ever God delivered His oracles by the multitude, or Nature truths by the herd." \*

Then, at last, there is a letter dated Dublin, August 12, 1693, announcing "the arrival of your much-desired piece of education which came not to me till about three days ago."

This is, of course, the famous *Thoughts concerning Education*, which is now put into the hands of students of pedagogy, but which is most inadequately appreciated if it be allowed to stand by itself. The book consists of about 180 pages; it is loaded with elaboration and repetition;

\* *Conduct of the Understanding*, § 24.



and, in rather strange contrast to Locke's other books, it markedly lacks system. For instance, it introduces a subject, and then often leaves its consideration for another twenty or thirty pages. Though these qualities make it a somewhat puzzling task for a student, I propose here to leave its details and dwell rather on its principles. The chief matters with which Locke deals in it are :—

- Health ;
- Formation of Habit ;
- Infliction of Punishment ;
- Influence of Companions ;
- Importance of the Teacher ;
- The Art of Teaching ;
- The Matter of Teaching.

The arrangement, with instruction relegated to the very end, shows what a closer perusal, specially perhaps of those pages which deal with the Tutor, drives home, that the aim of education to Locke is *increase of capacity* ; nor is it, as we might have expected, intellectual capacity only which interests him : it is all the capacities for which he cares, physical, intellectual, moral, yes, and within his own special limits of rationalised moderation, spiritual capacity too.

It is quite unnecessary to follow him through all the details and suggestions which he gives : it is far more interesting to trace the working in his educational system of his psychological principles. It has been argued above that though he was not a thorough sensationalist, yet the emphasis of his thought and of his recommendations leans to *experience* : his education, as apart from his instruction, tends then to the utilisation of experience. This accounts for his insistence upon the all-importance of habit, as *e.g.* in sect. 66 : " Pray remember, Children are *not* to be taught

and his own Conduct ; and he that is a good, a virtuous and able Man, must be made one within." \*

Was it not precisely the total disregard of this all-important, of this even alarming truth which made the futility of Rousseau ? With all his boasted training of *Émile* by " circumstances," and not by books, that wretched figment of a diseased imagination never struck even his own designer and guide as a responsible being who could be " trusted to himself." It was the tutor who selected Sophie, agreeably enough to French custom : but it was the tutor also, who, contrary to all custom French or other, found himself compelled to reside with the backboneless couple after their marriage, and to direct the happenings of their invertebrate lives. It was no such denuded human being as that whom Locke contemplated : his pupils, most emphatically, were to be " trusted to themselves." It is not until the 149th paragraph that the Reader finds a hint about instruction pure and simple : for Locke has dealt throughout with habits, disposition, training of capacity : here, it is the treatment of " listlessness ;" there, the overwhelming importance of noble example, as he quotes the cynical old Roman's concession to Innocence, *Maxima debetur Pueris reverentia* ; here, it is the handling of Obstinacy ; there, the need for " Good Breeding," for " Self-Restraint," and so forth. But, if one wanted to select one single sentence to indicate at once Locke's lofty aim, and his sane reliance on actual experience for its realisation, surely one would choose his great definition of *Fortitude*. " True Fortitude I take to be the quiet Possession of a Man's self, and an undisturb'd doing his Duty, whatever Evil besets, or Danger lies in the Way," † perhaps the finest, aptest ever penned, for it covers everything, from the brilliancy of military exploit or of heroism in the teeth of

\* *Thoughts concerning Education*, § 42.

the Ocean's Wrath to those drab valours of the everyday struggle when life seems less like a battle than a bore.

Although it is not set forth perhaps in quite such clear terms, Locke no less strenuously than Herbart, years afterwards, emphasised the dependence of the Virtuous Life on the cultivation of the Will by means of wise and suitable education ; though he would not have subscribed to that obvious false statement of Herbart, " the stupid cannot be virtuous." He insisted, too, on the " inwardness " of virtue, and upon its connexion with right volition. But, so often, Locke's counsels are sown casually by the wayside that a careless reader might, conceivably, miss them. That accounts, perhaps, for the charges of worldliness so often levelled against him. Yet, the care for " the things that are more excellent " is there, is even the underlying reason of his interest in educational matters. At the same time Herbart's psychology differs radically from Locke's, therefore the ground of his insistence upon the importance of education differs also from Locke's.

Herbart maintains that the child comes into the world with no natural tendency either to good or to evil, with no tendency indeed in any direction : hence he urges the all-importance of filling the empty vessel of the mind with those things which he would fain see and find there. Locke, in spite of his *tabula rasa*, in spite of his assertion that all our knowledge depends on sensation and reflexion, still writes : " I deny not that there are natural tendencies imprinted on the minds of men ; and that from the very first instances of sense and perception, there are some things that are grateful and others unwelcome to them, some things that they incline to, others that they flee." \*

Therefore, as Herbart will fill the empty vessel, so Locke

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, I. iii. § 3.

will train this tendency, prune that, and would, were such a thing possible, eradicate the other ; but he has not any strong belief in the rooting-out process. It is wholly unnecessary to follow him in the details of his curriculum, as he gives them in the *Thoughts concerning Education*, for that is a book which can easily be in every one's hands. Far more interesting to the philosophical student of pedagogy are his counsels for cultivating judgment, polishing the illative sense, in a word, for training the mind, which are to be found in those other treatises, which elaborate and amplify this one.

But lest any one should suppose that Locke's method might fail on the instructional side, it is worth while to quote just one passage from a letter which Molyneux wrote about his youthful son's progress : " I have already so much experience of your method of education that I long to see your third edition. And since you put me upon it (to whom I can refuse nothing in my power), I will give you a short account of my little boy's progress under it. He was six years old about the middle of last July. When he was but just turned five, he could read perfectly well, and on the globes could have traced out and pointed at all the noted parts, countries and cities of the world both land and sea. And by five and a half could perform many of the plainest problems on the globe, as the longitude and latitude, the antipodes, the time with them and other countries, etc., and this by way of play and diversion, seldom called to it, never chid or beaten for it. About the same age, he could read any number of figures, not exceeding six places, break it as you please, by cypher or zeros. By the time he was six, he could manage a compass, ruler, and pencil very prettily, and perform many little geometrical tricks, and advanced to writing and arithmetic ; and has been about three months at Latin, wherein his tutor observes, as nigh

as he can, the method prescribed by you. He can read a gazette, and in a large map of Sanson, shows most of the remarkable places as he goes along, and turns to the proper maps. He has been shown some dogs dissected, and can give some little account of the grand traces of anatomy. And as to the foundation of his mind, which you rightly observe to be the most valuable part of education ; I do not believe that any child had ever his passions more fully at command. He is obedient and observant to the nicest particular, and at the same time sprightly, playful, and active.

“ But I will say no more, this may be tiresome to others, however pleasing to myself.” \*

Even those who feel inclined to carp at the dissected dogs must admit that instruction and training here went hand in hand, and appear to have borne their due fruits. However, about seven months later, as though fearing that instruction was taking too large a share in the business, Locke wrote to Molyneux, insisting on his favourite thesis, the pre-eminent value of mental and moral training : † “ The first step towards knowledge is to have clear and distinct ideas ; which I have just reason, every day more and more, to think few men ever have, or think themselves to want ; which is one great source of that infinite jargon and nonsense, which so pesters the world. You have a good subject to work on ; and, therefore, pray, let this be your chief care, to fill your son’s head with clear and distinct ideas ; and teach him, on all occasions, both by practice and rule, how to get them, and the necessity of it. This, together with a mind active and set upon the attainment of reputation and truth, is the true principling of a young man. But to give him a reverence for our opinions, before we taught them, is not to make knowing men, but prattling parrots.

\* Molyneux to Locke from Dublin, August 24, 1695.

† Quoted, in another connexion, on p. 96.

I beg your pardon for this liberty : it is an expression of good-will, and not the less so, because not within the precise form of good breeding." \*

Thus, not only is the head to be filled with clear and distinct ideas, which is mere instruction after all, but the child is to be trained and taught how to acquire them ; and with this latter process Molyneux must have been already familiar, for one of the most valuable counsels which Locke ever wrote about this business of " getting ideas," may be found in the Fourth Book of his *Essay*, where he deals with " Error," and argues " that error is not a fault of our knowledge, but a mistake of our judgment, giving assent to that which is not true." † After all, it is as useful to know what to avoid as what to seek. That most candid, most penetrating of philosophers, Vauvenargues, wrote these poignant words about error : " Qu'on ait cru encore dans les siècles d'ignorance, l'impossibilité des antipodes, ou telle autre opinion que l'on reçoit sans examen, ou qu'on n'a pas même les moyens d'examiner, cela ne m'étonne en aucune manière ; mais que, tous les jours, sur les choses qui nous sont le plus familières, et que nous avons le plus examinées, nous prenions néanmoins le change ; que nous ne puissions avoir une heure de conversation un peu suivie sans nous tromper ou nous contredire, voilà à quoi je reconnais la petitesse de l'esprit humain. Un homme d'un peu de bon sens, qui voudrait écrire sur des tablettes tout ce qu'il entend dire dans le jour de faux et d'absurde, ne se coucherait jamais sans les avoir remplies." ‡

Locke took pains to discover the reasons why " men

\* Locke to Molyneux from Oates, March 30, 1696.

† *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. xx. § 1.

‡ *Discours sur le Caractère des différents Siècles. Œuvres de Vauvenargues*, Vol. I. pp. 154, 155.

come to give their assents contrary to probability," otherwise to fall into error. He reduced them to four :—

- (1) Want of proofs ;
- (2) Want of ability to use them ;
- (3) Want of will to use them ;
- (4) Wrong measures of probability."

It might be thought that the first of these, at any rate, is extra-educational : that if a person has not proofs, no education, no system of training, however skilful, can furnish them. And from one point of view that is true enough. But Locke's point of view is so well thought out and, therefore, so suggestive, that it seems worth while, even though the *Essay on the Human Understanding* is not precisely an uncommon book, and the passages are long, to quote them ; for uncommon or not, it is not now commonly read *through* :—

"By want of proofs I do not mean only the want of those proofs which are nowhere extant, and so are nowhere to be had ; but the want even of those proofs which are in being, or might be procured. And thus men want proofs who have not the convenience or opportunity to make experiments and observations themselves, tending to the proof of any proposition : nor likewise the convenience to inquire into, and collect the testimonies of others : and in this state are the greatest part of mankind, who are given up to labour, and enslaved to the necessity of their mean condition, whose lives are worn out only in the provision of living. These men's opportunities of knowledge and inquiry are commonly as narrow as their fortunes, and their understandings are but little instructed, when all their whole time and pains are laid out to still the croakings of their own bellies, or the cries of their children. It is not to be expected that a man who drudges on all his life in a laborious trade, should be more knowing in the variety

of things done in the world, than a pack-horse who is driven constantly forwards and backwards, in a narrow lane and dirty road, only to market, should be skilled in the geography of the country. Nor is it at all more possible, that he who wants leisure, books and languages, and the opportunity of conversing with variety of men, should be in a condition to collect those testimonies and observations which are in being and are necessary to make out many, nay, most of the propositions that, in the societies of men, are judged of the greatest moment : or to find out grounds of assurance so great, as the belief of the points, he would build on them, is thought necessary. So, that a great part of mankind are, by the natural and unalterable state of things in this world, and the constitution of human affairs, unavoidably given over to invincible ignorance of those proofs on which others build, and which are necessary to establish those opinions ; the greatest part of men having much to do to get the means of living, are not in a condition to look after those of learned and laborious inquiries." \*

Of course, it is open to any one to argue that the state of things pictured here by Locke could be altered by a change in our social and industrial arrangements, that it would be possible, *e.g.* to conduct a state on the principles of Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*. If it were, one overwhelming difficulty remains. People must be confirmed, hopeless optimists if they can persuade themselves that any beyond a small minority of their fellow-creatures have the faintest wish to pay, or the smallest intention of paying, in labour and sincerity, those heavy dues which Truth exacts from those who really follow her "along her star-paved way." The price of Truth is too high, and the value of it too successfully hidden, for the majority of men to pay the former or to grasp the latter. But Locke does not consider

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. xx, § 2.



this painful fact : he dwells on the lot of those who might prosecute the search for Truth were that for their daily bread less acute—

“ What shall we say then ? Are the greatest part of mankind, by the necessity of their condition, subjected to unavoidable ignorance in those things which are of greatest importance to them (for of these it is obvious to inquire). Have the bulk of mankind no other guide but accident and blind chance, to conduct them to their happiness or their misery ? Are the current opinions and licensed guides of every country, sufficient evidence and security to every man, to venture his greatest concerns on ; nay, his everlasting happiness or misery ? Or can those be the certain and infallible oracles and standards of truth which teach one thing in Christendom, another in Turkey ? Or shall a poor countryman be eternally happy, for having the chance to be born in Italy ; or a day labourer be unavoidably lost, because he had the ill-luck to be born in England ? How ready some men may be to say some of these things, I will not here examine : but this, I am sure, that men must allow one or other of these to be the true (let them choose which they please) or else grant that God has furnished men with faculties sufficient to direct them, in the way they should take, if they will but seriously employ them that way, when their ordinary vocations allow them the leisure. No man is so wholly taken up with the attendance on the means of living as to have no spare time at all to think of his soul, and inform himself in matters of religion. Were men as intent upon this as they are on things of lower concernment, there are none so unslaved to the necessities of life, who might not find many vacancies that might be husbanded to the advantage of their knowledge.” \*

It is a curious and unconvincing passage, possibly

2 *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. xx. § 2.

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because it approaches more nearly to cheap rhetoric than Locke is accustomed to do. He writes, for instance, as if the *same* authority taught one thing in Christendom and another in Turkey, a new and strange proposition. The implication that salvation is geographical, is almost too quaint to have been included in a serious philosophical argument. We can see Locke's raised eyebrows, and his shrugged shoulders ; but what we do not see, because he had not troubled to think it out, was any explanation of the differences in religious beliefs. The eighteenth century could hardly commit itself to an *Ecclesia docens*, and yet Locke detested open irreligion : so he lives on a see-saw, and prefers either to think that the world is made up of men of good-will, whose wisdom appears to reside in shirking all such questions, or, if he cannot do that because the facts are so untowardly awkward, then he will fall back on the individual possession of " faculties sufficient to direct them," without staying to inquire into the reality or actual efficacy of them ; without troubling to ask what is to be done when one man's " sufficient faculties " lead him to Islam, another's to Rome, another's to St. Petersburg, another's to Canterbury.

However, his unsatisfactory handling of the matter does not destroy the value of his suggestion that only too often, in the sphere of religion as well as out of it, one cause of error is absence or insufficiency of proof.

Next, he turns to want of skill in handling proofs, and here, in good sooth, he has laid his finger on a rich source of error. How very few people can either conduct or follow an argument ? How many people pepper their conversation with the words *so, therefore*, and the like, when, in reality, there has been no process of reasoning, no sequence of thought at all. Had Locke considered, as his predecessor Mulcaster did, the propriety and need of

establishing places where the teachers of youth could be trained, how vigorously he would have insisted on the necessity of inducing them to be *reasonable* in the true sense of the word. Can we doubt that when he urged that the tutor's main duty is to "form the mind," he had in his thoughts the devastating truth which he had expressed in the *Essay*,—"This is evident that there is a difference of degrees in men's understandings, apprehensions, and reasonings, to so great a latitude that one may, without doing injury to mankind, affirm, that there is a greater distance between some men and others, in this respect, than between some men and some beasts." \*

This sentence is a fit precursor of Mill's blighting indictment in the *Essay on Liberty* of the limited power of reasoning possessed by average persons: "On any matter not self-evident, there are ninety-nine persons totally incapable of judging it, for one who is capable; and the capacity of the hundredth person is only comparative." Yet reasoning is a process which can be cultivated. There are qualities which seem to be gifts, qualities like tact, the power of "getting on" with all and sundry, a sense of humour and so forth: we are tempted to think that one who does not apparently possess so much as the germ of these, must blunder sadly through life without. But any normal person can surely learn to reason if only he or she will take the trouble. There is the real rub: that the requisite trouble is considerable, and we seem to love ease increasingly. This fact lies at the root of Locke's third cause of error, the want of will to use proofs. His view of the province and function of Will has been considered already. It is sufficient here to quote a passage where, for once, he lets his feelings get the better of him. His scorn of those "men, whose plentiful fortunes allow them leisure

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. xx. § 5.

to improve their understandings," who yet "can satisfy themselves with a lazy ignorance," is concentrated in one biting sentence: "They who are blind will always be led by those that see, or else fall into the ditch; and he is certainly the most subjected, the most enslaved, who is so in his understanding." \*

He sub-divides his fourth cause of Error, Wrong Measures of Probability into four, which seem, considering what has already been written about the last of them, sufficiently to describe themselves:

- (1) Doubtful opinions taken for principles;
- (2) Received hypotheses;
- (3) Predominant passions;
- (4) Authority.

There is one cause of error which Locke does not mention. It is strangely prevalent to-day; perhaps it could hardly exist so soon after the country had been torn with civil war, and so did not present itself to Locke; that nebulous amiability which masquerades under the great name of Charity, and invites us to hold two contradictory propositions simultaneously for the sake of what it imagines to be love. Perhaps it has never been more necessary than it is now to insist on the fact that while we may find it necessary and even think it best and most right to let all kinds of men proclaim all kinds of opinions, lest we root up the wheat with the tares, yet there is no consideration to induce, no obligation to bind us to call a manifest tare a blade of wheat. Of two opposing propositions let us always remember that though it is possible that they may both be false, it is not possible that they can both be true. If any one will argue that charity requires us to condone possible or obvious intellectual and moral error, *i.e.* requires us not merely to leave it alone to work out and eventually

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, IV. xx. § 6.

demonstrate its own falsity, but to admit that it is entitled to as much admiration as any proposition which we have the best possible grounds for believing to be true, then, let us remember that once, long ago, there were two men, one of whom was called John and the other Cerinthus. The former most certainly possessed first-hand knowledge of the truths of Christianity :—

“I went for many years about the world,  
Saying, ‘it was so, so I heard and said,’  
Speaking as the case asked, and men believed.”\*

He would be a bold man indeed who would aspire to correct the charity of the Apostle of Love, who, long years after the days of the Son of Thunder, thus acted :—

“John, the disciple of the Lord, going to bathe at Ephesus, and perceiving Cerinthus within, rushed out of the bath house without bathing, exclaiming, ‘Let us fly, lest even the bath house fall down, because Cerinthus, the enemy of the truth, is within.’”†

St. John was not alone in those primitive days in outspoken condemnation of error :—

“And Polycarp himself replied to Marcion, who met him on one occasion and said, ‘Dost thou know me?’ ‘I do know thee, the first-born of Satan.’ Such was the horror which the apostles and their disciples had against holding even a verbal communication with any corrupters of the truth ; as Paul also says, ‘A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject.’”‡

“Cerinthus the enemy of the truth” : “any corrupters of the truth.” That is the true core of the position. But nowadays a gelatinous indifference seems to be sending Truth by the board.

\* *A Death in the Desert.* R. Browning.

† *Irenæus’ Against Heresies*, III. iii. 4.

‡ *Ibid.*

Such a condition of mental and moral indifference would have had short shrift at the hands of Locke ; but he did not perceive that it was the natural outcome of the drier, chiller side of his own philosophy. He loved Truth and the gallant quest of it, however much his effort to discover it by understanding alone undermined the whole position. "One may truly say that there are very few lovers of Truth for Truth's sake, even amongst those that persuade themselves that they are so. How a man may know whether he be so in earnest, is worth inquiry : and I think there is one unerring mark of it, viz. the not entertaining any proposition with greater assurance than the proofs it is built on will warrant : " the man who wrote those words, the man who in a letter to Molyneux spoke of Truth as " a parcel of this gold," would never have advocated a weak compromise of mutually destructive principles, in the supposed interests of Charity.

To maintain an unhesitating opposition to that which one believes to be error is not to claim infallibility. The best of us can but do our utmost to discover Truth : even so we may prove wrong. But if we admit the equal desirability and dignity of two opposing principles we *must* be wrong : such a line of action is not Christian Charity, but fatuous folly, a form of invalidity of which no follower of Locke's love of Truth could be guilty, whatever other faults he might commit.

Perhaps of all Locke's writings, the most interesting to the student of Pedagogy is *The Conduct of the Understanding* : nor need we admit his plea of the supremacy of the understanding over the will in order to enjoy it. He has no moonshiny delusions about "equality," such as those with which Rousseau befogged his co-temporaries' imaginations :—

"Amongst men of equal education there is a great

inequality of parts, and the woods of America, as well as the schools of Athens, produce men of several abilities in the same kind." \*

But the men and women of small parts are not left to plead their exiguous endowment as an excuse for unnecessarily meagre performance: "I imagine most men come very short of what they might attain unto in their several degrees, by a neglect of their understandings." †

He repeats practically what he said in the *Essay* about causes of Error: but here he speaks of these mishaps as "miscarriages of reason"; and one can picture the dry smile which curled round his thin lips when he wrote: "He that reflects upon the actions and discourses of mankind will find their defects in this kind very frequent and very observable." ‡

He pleads that understanding (he uses *reason* interchangeably with it) *properly used*, never betrayed any man; but that the real difficulty lies in "limitation of apprehension," "something is left out which should go into the reckoning to make it just and exact." §

We can well believe that it was no temptation to Locke to be led by the nose by other people; it is difficult to realise, in spite of the passage in Le Clerc's "Character" of him, that he had any working knowledge of the thing he calls "passion." But even he was subject to that human limitation which he describes in words curiously reminiscent of St. Paul: "We are all short-sighted; we see but in part, and we know but in part, and, therefore, it is no wonder we conclude not right from our partial views." ||

*The Conduct of the Understanding*, unlike the *Thoughts concerning Education*, was not intended to serve as a guide to

\* *Conduct of the Understanding*, § 2.

† *Ibid.* § 3.

§ *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.*

|| *Ibid.*

those who were bringing up young people. Yet, all teachers who really believe that the one supreme end of education is the development, the perfecting, of capacity (*all capacity*) will find much that is stimulating and suggestive in the pages where Locke casts about for *remedies* for this limited power of reason. In the first place, he urges us to learn to study other men's minds and views, which some teachers have not done. We may be very clever, he seems to say, other people may seem strangely, inconceivably stupid and futile, and even so it may help us to know what they think. It is no part of his plan that we should parrot other men's opinions; how could he, who was so vigorous about the impossibility of seeing with another man's eyes, dream of such a thing? But he hints that we must be singularly unfortunate if we are never influenced by other men's views; not because he wishes us to adopt them, far less to swallow them wholesale, unthinkingly. Sometimes, alien views modify ours merely: at another time, something quite new, not theirs, not ours originally, may spring up out of the clash of argument, idea, and opinion: "This might instruct the proudest esteemer of his own parts how useful it is to talk and consult with others, even such as come short of him in capacity, quickness, and penetration: for since no one sees all, and we generally have different prospects of the same thing . . . it is not incongruous to think, nor beneath any man to try, whether another may not have notions of things which have escaped him, and which his reason could make use of if they came into his mind." \*

It is interesting to reflect that this is not the amiable advice of a maker of theories for the use of other people; in that "Character of Mr. Locke," which was furnished to Le Clerc, which is quoted in chapter iii. of this book, it was said

\* *Conduct of the Understanding*, § 3.



of him, "He felt pleasure in conversing with all sorts of people, and tried to profit by their information, which arose not only from the good education he had received, but from the opinion he entertained that there was nobody from whom something useful could not be got."

In this age when specialisation in all branches of human activity is carried to an extreme, when people, really most imperfectly instructed, talk sedately about "my subject," Locke's advice to all and sundry not "to canton out to themselves a little Goshen in the intellectual world,"\* seems happily cogent.

The underlying principle here is the appreciation of the truth which dawned on the close of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries with ever-growing force, the truth of the Unity of Existence, of the interconnexion of all the parts of the Universe. We see the notion in the works of Locke's friend and pupil Shaftesbury: "So that there is a System of all Animals: an Animal-Order or Economy, according to which the Animal affairs are regulated and dispos'd. Now if the whole System of Animals, together with that of Vegetables, and all other Things in this inferior World, be properly comprehended in One System of a Globe or Earth: And if again this Globe or Earth itself appears to have a real Dependence on something still beyond; as *e.g.* either on its Sun, the Galaxy, or its Fellow Planets; then it is in reality a Part only of some other System. And if it be allowed that there is in like Manner a System of all Things and a Universal Nature; there can be no particular Being or System which is not either good or ill in that general one of the Universe: for if it be insignificant and of no use, it is a Fault or Imperfection, and consequently ill in the whole System."†

\* *Conduct of the Understanding*, § 3

† *Inquiry concerning Virtue*, Bk. I. Pt. ii. Shaftesbury.

Shaftesbury elaborated this point of view further in the second volume of *The Moralists*: "All Things in the World are united," he tells us there.

It was this notion of the Unity of Existence which impelled Locke to inveigh against our "little Goshen" ways, which winged his pen with scorn for those who live "mewed up within their own contracted territories, and will not look abroad beyond the boundaries that chance, conceit, or laziness has set to their inquiries." Locke gave impetus to the idea: Shaftesbury elaborated it and polished it, Pope drove it home:

"Vast chain of Being! which from God began,  
Natures ethereal, human, angel, man,  
Beast, bird, fish, insect, what no eye can see,  
No glass can reach, from infinite to thee,  
From thee to nothing . . . .  
From Nature's chain whatever link you strike,  
Tenth or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike!

Let earth unbalanc'd from her orbit fly,  
Planets and suns run lawless through the sky;  
Let ruling angels from their spheres be hurl'd,  
Being on being wrecked, and world on world;  
Heaven's whole foundations to their centre nod,  
And Nature trembles to the throne of God:  
All this dread order break,—for whom? for thee?  
Vile worm!—O madness! pride! impiety!"

But the point for students of education, the point which Locke would urge in his cold relentless fashion is that the "dread order" may be broken by something less imposing than madness, pride, impiety, viz. by narrow, wilful, lazy ignorance. There is the educator's opportunity, to cast the net for Truth widely. The remedy, so he pleads, lies with us, ourselves: be careful of *habits*, the old point urged in the *Thoughts concerning Education*: what you wish to do, that win the power of doing by practice. In the intellectual, as in the physical world, skill comes,

as he never wearies of reminding us, from practice ; neglect of our powers means final atrophy. " We are born with faculties and powers capable of almost anything," he writes ; and then, lest he should have outraged sobriety, he adds with careful precision, " such at least as would carry us further than can be easily imagined." \*

The most modern disbeliever in " mere theory," could hardly speak more decisively than Locke : " Nobody is made anything by hearing of rules, or laying them up in his memory : *practice must settle the habit* of doing without reflecting on the rule ;" yet that is not the same thing as belittling or denying the necessity of rules.

Locke proceeds to give advice as to the polishing of the Understanding. He reminds us of what he has said before about " getting clear and determined ideas," and of " settling the signification of words which we use with ourselves in the search of truth," and this reminds us that neither Rousseau nor Pestalozzi invented the value of " reality in teaching," as some of their admirers seem to imagine : and it reminds us also of the necessity of studying the whole of a man's work, and not one single bit, like the *Thoughts concerning Education* ; that is if we really wish to know what he thought and counselled.

It is not necessary to follow Locke in detail through the *Conduct of the Understanding* : the most interesting of his suggestions may suffice. Among these, his remarks on Mathematics must be reckoned, first because he held sensible views on the point ; and secondly because he does not dwell on them in the *Thoughts concerning Education*. He is not one of those people who gauge a person's entire mental outfit by his ability or inability to wrestle with mathematics, he was too level-headed for that. But he regards them as a valuable factor in education. He has

\* *Conduct of the Understanding*, § 7.

not any apprehension that all men will be, or desire that "all men should be deep mathematicians;" his aim in insisting on this branch of study is that people should learn "the connexion and dependence of ideas," and that this connexion and dependence "should be followed till the mind is brought to the source on which it bottoms, and observes coherence all along." \*

Locke seems to have perceived that though it is no easier to make mistakes in mathematics than in anything else, it is much harder to avoid seeing them when they are made. That is not the only advantage: not only do mathematics train men to "observe coherence all along," but it accustoms them to "separate all the distinct ideas."

A little further on he administers a cold-water shock in one of those pitiless arguments of his: we are never, he says, to *wish* any opinion to be true until we know it is, and then it is futile to wish. In rapid succession, he deals with the common causes of our common intellectual failures. He condemns our habit of reading without digestion, our search for arguments to suit our points, our neglect of those which contradict; our haste, our desultoriness, our smattering. All these faults are surely as common now as when Locke wrote; perhaps more so, since we live, and in our futile fashion try to learn, in a bustle; we yearn for short cuts, and tangible, visible results. On the top of all that Locke's uncompromising dicta fall like a sledge-hammer:

"Reading furnishes the mind only with materials of knowledge; it is thinking makes what we read ours." †

"Truth, whether in or out of fashion, is the measure of Knowledge, and the Business of the Understanding." ‡

It is possible that Locke was thinking of the children he

\* *Conduct of the Understanding*, § 7.

† *Ibid.* § 20.

‡ *Ibid.* § 24:

had known, for whose education he had cared so sincerely and sensibly : but he writes as if he had adults in mind :

"There is scarce any one without some idiosyncrasy that he suffers by. This man presumes upon his parts, that they will not fail him at time of need, and so thinks it superfluous labour to make any provision beforehand. . . .

"On the other side, there are others that depress their own minds, despond at the first difficulty, and conclude that the getting an insight in any of the Sciences, or making any progress in knowledge further than serves their ordinary business, is above their capacities. These sit still because they think they have not legs to go ; as the others, I last mentioned do, because they think they have wings to fly, and can soar on high when they please." \*

Whether or no Locke was thinking of children, it is certain that every experienced teacher is familiar with both sorts of young people, those who "presume," and those who "despond." For the latter, Locke has cheerful words : "Nobody knows what strength of parts he has, until he has tried them. And of the understanding one may most truly say, that its force is greater generally than it thinks, until it is put to it. *Viresque acquirit eundo.*" †

In one of his most suggestive stimulating addresses on Education, Dr. Creighton maintained that ability to see the core, the real centre of a problem is the characteristic mark of an educated person. And Locke, whose view of education, whether it were expressed formally in his set pedagogic treatise, or adumbrated or lightly sketched in books written avowedly for some different purpose, was always concerned, like Montaigne too, with the training rather than with the filling of the mind ; like Montaigne, he would fain not have it said of his pupils "qu'ils ont la souvenance assez pleine, mais le jugement entierement

\* *Conduct of the Understanding*, §§ 38, 39.

† *Ibid.* § 39.

creux " : \* and so also he, with Dr. Creighton, would invite us to select, to discriminate, in a word to drive straight for the centre : " The mind of man being very narrow, and so slow in making acquaintances with things, and taking in new truths, that no one man is capable, in a much longer life than ours, to know all truths, it becomes our prudence, in our search after knowledge, to employ our thoughts about fundamental and material questions, carefully avoiding those that are trifling : and not suffering ourselves to be diverted from our main even purpose, by those that are merely incidental." †

" There are fundamental truths, that lie at the bottom, the basis upon which a great many others rest, and in which they have their consistency. . . . These, and such as these, are the truths we should endeavour to find out, and store our minds with. Which leads me to another thing in the conduct of the understanding, that is no less necessary, viz. :

" To accustom ourselves in any question proposed to examine and find out upon what it bottoms." ‡

To work in school, *i.e.* in schools of every grade, so that, in their several ways of life and occupation, the children acted on these principles, till, as men and women, they came to be habitually reasonable, habitually inclined to neglect the superficial for the fundamental, would be success indeed. We are far, pitifully far, from any such condition. Cannot those, or at least some of them, who care for education, be induced to turn back a few leaves in our national life, to study if not in the actual letter yet in the spirit, this able scholar, this sensible, practical person, a philosopher indeed, but a man who while he had and retained leisure to think, had also the alertness and the desire to observe ; who had no axe to grind, no invention to

\* *Essais*, Michel de Montaigne, I. xxiv.

† *Conduct of the Understanding*, § 48.

‡ *Ibid.* §§ 43. 44.

patent, who had even succeeded in stripping himself of that vulgar thing, class prejudice ; the man who cared supremely and first and last to find out what was true, and, in the limited degree of his success—since “we are all short-sighted”—to act upon it when it was found :

“Common or uncommon are not the marks to distinguish truth or falsehood, and, therefore, should not be any bias to us in our inquiries. We should not judge of things by man’s opinions, but of opinions by things. The multitude reason but ill, and therefore may be well suspected, and cannot be relied on, nor should be followed as a sure guide ; but philosophers, who have quitted the orthodoxy of the community, and the popular doctrines of their countries, have fallen into as extravagant and absurd opinions as ever common reception countenanced. It would be madness to refuse to breathe the common air, or quench one’s thirst with water, because the rabble use them to these purposes ; and if there are conveniences of life which common use reaches not, it is not reason to reject them, because they are not grown into the ordinary fashion of the country, and every villager doth not know them.

“Truth, whether in or out of fashion, is the measure of Knowledge and the Business of the Understanding.” \*

\* *Conduct of the Understanding*, § 24.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE EDGEWORTHS ON EDUCATION

**T**HE *Essays on Education* first published in 1798, just about a century after Locke's *Thoughts concerning Education*, were the work of four members of the Edgeworth family. The book was planned originally by the father, Mr. Richard Lovell Edgeworth, the chapter on *Obedience* was compiled from notes written by his wife ; while his son, Lovell, and his daughter, Maria, wrote considerable portions.

Probably it is read by few now ; and yet it is not only suggestive in itself, but it throws interesting light on the state of education in England then ; for though the authors may have belonged to the more thoughtful and intellectually venturesome section of the community, yet the number of distinguished men who adorned the close of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, is a very cogent argument in disfavour of the charges of deadness and dulness, sometimes levelled against the period.

The book is lengthy, and after the manner of pedagogic treatises rather prone to repetition, therefore some re-arrangement of the subject-matter is desirable. The chief points can be summed up under four heads :—

- (1) The relative advantages of private and public Education ;
- (2) General outlook on Education ;
- (3) The Edgeworths' Psychology ;



## (4) The curriculum.

The relative advantages of home and school education have been debated periodically at least since the days when Quintilian pronounced unhesitatingly in favour of school: for example, Locke's scathing phrase for sending a boy to a public school—"venturing him abroad in the herd"—does not slip from the memory easily; though he is less persuasive perhaps than Mme. d'Épinay, who put her finger on a real difficulty in public school work, which she called "l'impossibilité d'acquérir cette connaissance intime du caractère de chaque enfant, sans laquelle on ne sauroit se promettre aucun succès de son éducation."

The Edgeworths insist, most wisely, on the importance of good education at home up to the school age. As if they were sensible of the abundance of good advice offered to parents by older writers, though uniformly neglected by those responsible for the upbringing of children, they remark pathetically that this idea is reiterated and placed "in different points of view, in hopes that it will catch and fix the attention." \*

They allege five disadvantages attaching to public school education:—

- i. Too much time sacrificed to the study of the learned languages.
- ii. Too little attention paid to the general improvement of the understanding and to formation of moral character.
- iii. Too little individual attention to pupils so different from one another in habits and temper (Madame d'Épinay's point).
- iv. Too little co-operation between parents and school-masters; the main blame being laid on the former.

\* *Essays on Education*, 3rd edit. vol. ii. p. 153.

## v. The danger of bad company.\*

In a sweeping phrase they indicate their view of the shortcomings of the public schools of their day: "It is incumbent on us to caution parents from expecting that the moral character, the understandings, or the tempers of their children, should be improved at large schools; there, the learned languages, we acknowledge, are successfully taught." †

The modern man may rub his eyes. He has been accustomed to hear *ad nauseam* that though possibly the Public Schools of England may be regarded as training grounds of "character," yet they, for some unfortunate and inexplicable reason, fail, in spite of many hours spent, to impart an adequate knowledge of even the classic tongues. He wonders, as he rubs his eyes, what can have happened during the nineteenth century. Perhaps, into his puzzled mind there slip some well-known lines:—

"The sand of the desert is sodden red,—  
Red with the wreck of a square that broke;—  
The Gatling's jammed and the Colonel dead,  
And the regiment blind with dust and smoke.  
The river of death has brimmed his banks,  
And England's far, and Honour a name,  
But the voice of a schoolboy rallies the ranks:  
'Play up! play up! and play the game!'" ‡

They were written just about one hundred years after the Edgeworths had warned English parents that though their sons might learn Latin and Greek at a Public School, yet their moral characters, their understandings, and their tempers would be left unimproved. Perhaps not all the complaints about our English Education need be taken quite literally: for even a Public School cannot fail and succeed in the same point.

\* *Essays on Education*, vol. ii. pp. 147, 150.

† *Ibid.* p. 149.

‡ *Vitai Lampada*, Henry Newbolt.

The Edgeworths bring another charge against Public Schools, which being rather original, and surely an outcome of that minute and accurate observation in which they were singularly apt, may be given a place to itself, viz. that the change from school to "life" is greater than that between home-education and "life." They urge that if a boy have spent ten years at school, "a temporary enthusiasm may have been kindled in his soul by the eloquence of antiquity; but for want of sympathy, this enthusiasm necessarily dies away. His heroes are not the heroes of the present times; the maxims of his sages are not easily introduced into the conversation of the day. At the tea-table he now seldom hears even the name of Plato; and he often blushes for not knowing a line from a popular English poet, whilst he could repeat a cento from Horace, Virgil, and Homer; or an antistrophe from Æschylus or Euripides. He feels ashamed to produce the knowledge he has acquired, because he has not learned sufficient address to produce it without pedantry. On his entrance into the world there remains in his mind no grateful, no affectionate, no respectful remembrance of those under whose care he has passed so many years of his life. He has escaped from the restraints imposed by his schoolmaster, and the connexion is dissolved for ever. But when a son separates from his father, if he has been well educated he wishes to continue his own education; the course of his ideas are (*sic*) not suddenly broken; what he has been joins immediately with what he is to be, his knowledge applies to real life, it is such as he can use in all companies, there is no sudden metamorphosis in any of the objects of his ambition, the boy and man are the same individual." \*

It is fairly obvious that they regard schools as a *pis-aller*: for the one advantage they allow them to possess,

\* *Essays on Education*, vol. ii. p. 164.

viz. the power of giving a certain social *cachet* to those who cannot obtain it at home, is, whatever else it might be called, hardly convincing from the educator's point of view. Their curious view is expressed thus: "There is another reason which has, perhaps, operated upon many, in the middle ranks of life, unperceived, and which determines them in favour of public education. Persons of narrow fortunes who have acquired wealth in business are often desirous of breeding up their sons to the liberal professions; and they are conscious that the company, the language and the style of life, which their children would be accustomed to at home, are beneath what would be suited to their future professions. Public schools efface this rusticity, and correct the faults of provincial dialect: in this point of view they are highly advantageous. We strongly recommend it to such parents to send their children to large public schools, to Eton or Westminster; not to any small school, much less to one in their own neighbourhood. Small schools are apt to be filled with persons of nearly the same station, and out of the same neighbourhood; from this circumstance they contribute to perpetuate uncouth, antiquated idioms, and many of those obscure prejudices which cloud the intellect in the future business of life." \*

Their odd plea that knowledge of classic literature or the cultivation of "a nice and refined sense of right and wrong" would be thrown away on "young men designed for the army and navy," leads one to suppose that their acquaintance with "service men" must have been limited. Had they, for example, heard, one wonders, of that gallant soldier and penetrating philosopher, Vauvenargues? Certainly they could not have appreciated his work.

It is a relief to turn from these somewhat vulgar views

\* *Essays on Education*, vol. ii. p. 149.

to their general outlook on Education. Here, they are terribly cautious, these good people: "We do not set up for projectors or reformers: we wish to keep steadily in view the actual state of things, as well as our hopes of progressive improvement: and to seize and combine all that can be immediately serviceable, all that can assist without precipitating improvements." \* Their reason for this attitude is as funny as their expression of it: "We are fully conscious that we have executed but very imperfectly even our own design: that experimental education is yet but in its infancy, and that boundless space for improvement remains: but we flatter ourselves that attentive parents and preceptors will consider with candour the practical assistance which is offered to them, especially as we have endeavoured to express our opinions without dogmatical presumption, and without the illiberal exclusion of any existing institutions or prevailing systems. People who even with the best intentions attack with violence any of these, and who do not consider what is practicable, as well as what ought to be done, are not likely to persuade or to convince mankind, to increase the general sum of happiness, or their own portion of felicity. Those who really desire to be of service to Society, should point out decidedly, but with temperate indulgence for the feelings and opinions of others, whatever appears to them absurd or reprehensible in any prevailing customs: having done this, they will rest in the persuasion that what is most reasonable will ultimately prevail." †

The naïve separation of "what ought to be done" from "what is practicable," and the drab aim of measuring the scope of a suggested novelty, by the probable result, as one increases or modifies it, on one's own "felicity"

\* *Essays on Education*, vol. ii. p. 147-

† *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 146.

are quaint enough ; but they pale into dulness beside the eighteenth century's decorous "persuasion that what is most reasonable will ultimately prevail." Of course much depends on the interpretation of *ultimately*. If it refer to this world's arrangements, it is to be feared that the Edgeworths were grounding their persuasion on some less solid basis than the teachings of History.

But as we study their plan, which they themselves heralded in such dun-coloured phrases, we are pleasantly surprised. They have grasped two points at last. First they realise that education worthy the name must rest on psychological principles ; secondly, that it is a far wider, deeper, more comprehensive matter than any mere instruction. They regard all real education as a development of capacity and a ripening of judgment, intellectual and moral. In this, of course, they are at one with Locke, even if they are not actually indebted to him for the clearness with which they both grasp and express the problem. The passage in which they set forth their precise meaning is so excellent, and the substance of it is still, in spite of all our efforts, so contrary to the wrong-headed point of view current among average people, that long though it be, it should be recalled to the common recollection : " We do not mean to promise that a boy judiciously educated shall appear at ten years old a prodigy of learning : far from it ; we should not even estimate his capacity or his chance of future progress, by the quantity of knowledge stored in his memory, by the number of Latin lines he has got by rote, by his expertness in repeating the rules of his grammar, by his pointing out a number of places readily in a map ; or even by his knowing the latitude and longitude of all the capital cities in Europe : these are all useful articles of knowledge, but they are not the tests of a good education. We should rather, if we were to examine a boy of ten years

old, for the credit of his parents, produce proofs of his being able to reason accurately : of his quickness in invention, of his habits of industry and application ; of his having learned to generalise his ideas, and apply his observations and his principles ; if we found he had learned all or any of these things, we should be in little pain about grammar, or geography, or even Latin ; we should be tolerably certain that he would not long remain deficient in any of these ; we should know that he would overtake and surpass a competitor who had only been technically taught as certainly as that the giant would overtake the panting dwarf, who might have many miles start of him in the race. We do not mean to say that a boy should not be taught the principles of grammar, and some knowledge of geography, at the same time that his understanding is cultivated in the most enlarged manner : these objects are not incompatible." \*

The closing words show that the Edgeworths are not among those theorists who spoil the whole business in hand by a habit of proposing quite unnecessary alternatives ; as if, *e.g.* a person could not be, and ought not to be, both instructed and educated. It is all the more to their credit because most people speak and write in too unqualified a fashion ; and too many of those who rightly object to reducing a child's mind to the condition of a neatly packed box, have spoken as if it were possible to train a vacuum ; than which, of course, nothing could be really further from their thoughts. But even the Edgeworths fail, perhaps, in not making it sufficiently clear that instruction, or that which they call " principles of grammar and some knowledge of geography," (with all the rest of the curriculum which, at the moment, they do not stay to specify), is naturally the stuff upon which the judgment should be

\* *Essays on Education*, vol. ii. p. 155.

exercised, by the handling of which the understanding should be cultivated. They might, once more, have pointed out that the *aim* of instruction is not only that certain facts may be remembered, but that the mind may be stored with materials upon which thought can exercise itself. Some people in their zeal for "education" as contrasted with what they are pleased to call "mere instruction," seem to forget that, after all, there must be besides the trainer, a mind to train, and materials whereby to train it. Dr. Creighton once reproached us for seeming to think that the human mind is like a coal-cellar, into which when we have removed the grating we can pitch any contents we please. To do that is, of course, an error of the first water. But, in spite of the commonly misleading nature of analogical arguments, one may be permitted to suggest that while the human mind does not resemble a coal-cellar, it is rather like a coffee-mill, in this respect at least that if nothing is put in, nothing comes out.

It was the abbé de Fénélon who observed that, while it is true, as Rousseau suggested, that children do not, as a rule, reason well, yet that is not because, as Rousseau maintained, their powers of reasoning are weak, but because their experience is so limited, their knowledge of facts so comparatively exiguous. Locke and the Edgeworths agree in valuing instruction and education, and in maintaining the superior value of the latter over the former; but they fail to point out, with sufficient clearness, that the matter of instruction is among the means of education.

Their aim, stated succinctly, is to turn children out, not walking encyclopædias, or even small manuals of general information, but beings ready to tackle difficulties, surmount impediments, invent expedients.

The next point is what method do they advocate for the compassing of this end? Theirs is as frankly utilitarian



as Locke's : and they believe as profoundly as he did in the moulding power of Education.

Locke wrote : " Things then are good or evil, only in reference to pleasure and pain. That we call good, which is apt to cause or increase pleasure, or diminish pain in us ; or else to procure, or preserve us the possession of any other good, or absence of any evil." \*

Elsewhere he wrote : " I think I may say that of all the men we meet with, nine parts of them are what they are, good or evil, useful or not, by their education. 'Tis that which makes the Great Difference in Mankind." †

It really almost seems as if the Edgeworths had merely combined these two statements in one when they wrote the following : " The ' general principle ' that we should associate pleasure with whatever we wish our pupils to pursue, and pain with whatever we wish they should avoid, forms, our readers will perceive, the basis of our plan of education. This maxim, applied to the cultivation of the understanding, or of the affections, will, we apprehend, be equally successful. Virtues, as well as abilities, or what is properly called genius, we believe to be the result of education, more than the gift of nature." ‡

Their choice of pleasure as an " end " is quite deliberate " The only method to secure the obedience, the willing, enlightened obedience of rational beings is to convince them by experience that it tends to their happiness." § It may be remarked, in passing, that the Edgeworths when they deal with that difficult educational problem—winning obedience—propose to treat children with more sympathy and elasticity than Locke did in theory ; though

\* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, II. xx. § 2.

† *Thoughts concerning Education*, § 1.

‡ *Essays on Education*, vol. ii. p. 410.

§ *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 415.

apparently in practice he was the most just and kind of preceptors. At any rate, children loved him ; and, as a rule, they are good judges. But his theoretical method, even after Molyneux' remonstrances, remains harsh in expression. Occasionally even the Edgeworths venture outside the chill propriety of the eighteenth century, always with happy results, *e.g.* "Children are not fools, and are not to be governed like fools." \*

It was in accordance with this principle, and with their plea for consistency and sequence of treatment that they elaborated their wise theory of punishment, which was to be remedial, not revengeful : "The consequences which naturally follow every species of good conduct are the proper and best rewards that we can devise." † Where they failed was in their quaint and unobservant conviction that the immediate reward of virtuous conduct is invariably "pleasant," in the common and rather vapid meaning of that question-begging epithet.

The next point of importance is their Psychology, as we should call it, though they applied to it no such fine name. They contented themselves with the sage proviso that a sound theory of education must be based on philosophical principles : a position they owe, probably, consciously or unconsciously, to Locke. Perhaps their main recommendations may be summed up under three heads, Attention, Memory, and Judgment.

The Edgeworths proffer the sensible advice that we should not fatigue attention, a polite reminder to the bores of society : "The actual progress made in our business at one sitting is not of so much importance as the desire left in the pupil's mind to sit again." ‡ They relate a story of a man who, wishing to give pleasure to two

\* *Essays on Education*, vol. ii. p. 415.

† *Ibid.* p. 417.

Esquimaux dressed them à l'Anglais, and perambulated them through the streets of London—London of the last decade of the eighteenth century. The unhappy pair, quite silent during the process, sat down on their return, and covering their faces with their hands, ejaculated: "Too much smoke—too much noise—too much houses—too much men—too much everything." This may be a true picture of the minds of more children than we suppose on their first introduction to School.

As aids to Attention, they insist upon distinctness, accuracy, repetition, opportuneness. They remind us that when things are strange and new, we expend far more energy on them than is really necessary, and that, to children, more things than we realise are strange. The expenditure of youthful energy is, therefore, far greater than ours, consequently their attention tires before that of their teachers. No doubt, all these things are commonplaces now; but they were not when the Edgeworths wrote: moreover, commonplaces or not, many lessons are still given daily in England where these facts are neglected, and not always by complete tiros. Mr. de Montmorency once wrote: "The nation for nearly a century lay to all appearance fallow, with room for the weeds of vice and ignorance to flourish." \* It is not a point of view which will commend itself to those who reflect upon the great men who flourished then, some educated in public schools like Shelley, Southey, Coleridge, and Charles Lamb; some in Grammar Schools, like Wordsworth, Bishop Butler, Byron, and De Quincey; some rather fortuitously like Gibbon and Blake. Nor will it commend itself to those who read the Edgeworths' *Essays on Education*, with its careful study of developing human nature.

\* *State Intervention in English Education*, by J. S. G. de Montmorency, p. 169.

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For they go on, from the general view of attention, to analyse the different forms of it exhibited by children of diverse temperaments, by the timid, the sauntering, the "bird-witted." Like Locke, they entertained no high hopes of the constitutional "saunterer;" and they, writing in that eighteenth century which did not spoil children under the pretence of loving them, show lively sympathy for the quick child consigned to the care of a slow and lumbering pedagogue: "Nothing wearies a quick child more than to be forced slowly to retrace his own thoughts, and to repeat the words of a discourse to show that he has listened to it. A tutor who is slow in understanding the ideas of a vivacious pupil, gives him so much trouble and pain, that he is silent from not finding it worth his while to speak." \*

They had thoroughly gauged the ease with which children can be and are bored: "A preceptor . . . must . . . proportion the number of his repetitions to the temper and habits of his pupils, else he will weary instead of strengthening the attention. When a thing is clear, let him never try to make it clearer. When a thing is understood, not a word more of exemplification should be added." † Absolutely persuaded as they are that all persons who attain striking success owe it to the exercise of attention, they embark on an illusory scheme of perpetual change which they hope might make perpetual attention a possibility: "If we could exactly discover how to arrange mental employments so as to induce actions in the antagonist faculties of the mind, we might relieve it from fatigue in the same manner as the eye is relieved by change of colour. By pursuing this idea, might we not hope to cultivate the general power of attention to a degree of perfection hitherto unknown?" ‡

\* *Essays on Education*, vol. i. p. 123.

† *Ibid.* p. 129.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 143.

Professor Mosso's researches seem to have established the fact that there comes a point when the exertion of further activity fails for lack of nervous energy, not from want of variety or absence of interest.\*

It is a curious thing that they should have dealt with Attention in the third chapter, while deferring their treatment of Memory—so dependent on it—till the twenty-first.

They remark in the Summary of the Book, which Summary really contains the pith of their theory: "We do not set that high value upon Memory which some preceptors are inclined to do:" and, in a charming phrase, they explain why. "Pupils . . . lay up treasures for moths to corrupt; they acquire a quantity of knowledge, they learn a multitude of words by rote, and they cannot produce a single fact, or a single idea, in the moment when it is wanted: they collect but they cannot combine." †

Rather curiously they comment on the reduced value of Memory after the invention of printing: but surely that did not abolish the use of memory, rather it combines with selective judgment, and alters the matter to be remembered: *e.g.* perhaps we recall the place on the page, "how it looked," instead of the actual passage. The change is not even necessarily for the better.

They hit upon the true difficulty in all memory training when they observe that "we cannot always foresee what facts may be useful, and what may be useless to us, otherwise the cultivation of the memory might be conducted by unerring rules." ‡ It is in consonance with their general regard for principles that they scorn "technical" aids to memory, in favour of "philosophic order"; things,

\* *Fatigue*, by Professor Mosso.

† *Essays upon Education*, vol. ii. p. 428.

‡ *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 225.

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they argue, should be remembered in connexion with natural sequence, not by some artificial jingle. Further, they call attention to the value to memory of "selection": for, after all, bare naked banal accuracy will include much in a story which, while it may have been synchronous, will have been quite irrelevant; a fact which any rural court of law, engaged, for example, on a right-of-way case, will prove. When the Edgeworths turn to practical methods of aiding memory, they pay attention again to differences of temperament, pointing out that quick children will resent the repetition of experiences, while slow children will enjoy dawdling again and again along already well-worn paths.

Finally, they insist on the aid which *invention* can lend to Memory; but they are careful to urge that inventors are specially prone to the faults of over-valuing their own line of work, neglecting the hypotheses of other people; further, rather curiously they charge inventors with an undue regard for what is established and scorning novelty, also of attributing undue ignorance to the general public. Although it will be seen from all this that when they are dealing with Attention and Memory, the Edgeworths show much knowledge of child nature, especially in their recognition of different temperaments, timid, quick, slow, etc., yet they shirk the difficult problem of handling these children all together in a class in such a manner that the utmost is made of their natural gifts, the utmost is done to correct natural weaknesses. Perhaps they shirk it because it is not soluble by any real recipe which can be expressed in words, and is often imperfectly soluble in practice. Those who are familiar with the customary pæans sung in honour of Pestalozzi and of his co-temporaries in Switzerland and Germany, may possibly, when they first stumble on the Edgeworths, and come to appreciate their grasp of "child

nature," wonder why English people at any rate have given all the honour for the discovery of the child to any one and every one save their own countrymen.

Finally, the Edgeworths pass to the business of Judgment. They put their views in a nutshell: "Observation must precede reasoning." There is no doubt a sense in which this is true; but it is a proposition whose true import is often obscure, and which is used, not infrequently, to over exalt the sphere of "the senses" in education. Possibly Professor Darroch, in his little book on Herbart, made the most daring attack of recent times on this misuse of a truth, when he argued that properly speaking there is no such thing as cultivating the senses, and that the presentations of sense are useless practically without a mental contribution from the presentee, or what he called an "interpreting system of ideas."

As a matter of actual fact, not only what we see but the use we make of it depends largely upon the mind, and the furniture of that mind which we bring to bear on that which our physical eyes see. And this is true in all regions of discovery and intellectual activity; a new animal, a newly discovered substance, a new poem, a new archæological "find" are actually *seen* absolutely differently by the uninformed person as compared with the informed person in the realms of Zoology, Chemistry, Letters, Archæology; seen as well as judged differently. Often, surely, observation and judgment must proceed *pari passu*, and at other times, judgment sometimes goes before, as when, out of our previous knowledge we arrange the circumstances of a new experiment to be observed. Everywhere, modern educational philosophy seems as if it were being driven back to the position of Plato's philosopher, "the man who sees things together;" everywhere educators are being driven towards synthesis, towards inclusion:

at most, as Voltaire told Vauvenargues, they may have preferences but no exclusions.

Undoubtedly, the Edgeworths are on sound ground when they urge that children, if asked for judgments, should only be asked for them when and where they can really have some data.

"What are you to be? Are you to be a bishop or a judge? Had you rather be a general or an admiral, my little dear?—are some of the questions which every one has probably heard proposed to children of five or six years old. Children who have not learned by rote the answers to such interrogations, stand in amazed silence upon these occasions; or else answer at random having no possible means of forming any judgment upon such questions." \*

It is not only true that children are "amazed" by such demands, they are also annoyed and embarrassed. If there be one thing which normal children of average ability esteem greatly it is being taken seriously by their elders: *i.e.* they have a taste for being treated as sensible and responsible beings. When they are confronted with such questions as those enumerated above, they have an uneasy idea that their elders are poking fun at them. In half the cases it is not so, the questions themselves are often the outcome of shyness and awkwardness. And yet why should any one so utterly forget his own youth, what he liked, what he disliked, what he suspected, as not to know how to converse with a child say for five minutes?

How largely the faults of children are really the responsibility of their elders, the Edgeworths described in one withering sentence: "Unless they have been in the habit of hearing foolish conversation, they" (children) "very seldom talk nonsense." †

\* *Essays on Education*, vol. ii. p. 334.

† *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 335.



One last sensible piece of advice modern educators may well accept from them, viz. to guard children from letting wit betray judgment. Without doubt, the temptation to sacrifice truth to a jest is at times real: the desire to be funny may be nothing but a snare, a snare from which the naturally dull may congratulate themselves on being happily exempt.

The curriculum of the Edgeworths can be dealt with speedily: it was to include classics, grammar, geography, chronology, arithmetic, geometry, mechanics, and chemistry. Some modern compilers may think it rather a fortuitous concourse of atoms, but it scarcely justifies Mr. de Montmorency's gibe at eighteenth century "fallowness." The one striking point about their actual "method" is perhaps their advocacy of the conversational method of teaching the parts of speech.

Besides these four fundamental points in the Edgeworth's theory, it may be interesting to take account briefly of two other matters with which they deal, the first being Recreation. On the doubtless sound principle that all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, they had the courage indeed to start their two-volume treatise upon education with a long chapter *On Toys*.

They protest against the common idea that children destroy costly toys simply out of natural depravity. No such thing! say the Edgeworths; they pull them to pieces from the "perfectly innocent" desire to discover *what* they are made of, *how* they are made, and whether, when once taken to pieces, they can by any ingenuity be reconstructed. The unfortunate fact that the answer to the last is generally as a heckled member of the Government would tell the House of Commons "in the negative" is the real root of the difficulty, *hinc illae lacrimae* of parents and guardians over apparent youthful vice, which rightly

viewed is merely infant intelligence. But, jesting apart, nowhere in the book is the Edgeworths' genuine appreciation of children more apparent than in this chapter on Toys, where they urge us to give children such as they can put to different uses ; to let them alone when they set out on voyages of discovery, even though to our maturer wisdom they may seem to set out compassless in a cockle-boat : to give them materials for drawing when they arrive at what we may call the " pictorial age," to let them have tools and materials for creating things ; to provide them with games that call forth sensible activities, and, finally, where possible, to let them be interested in the things which interest them naturally ; to avoid the temptation to exclude that which to a maturer mind appears useless, or " messy " or both ; and, lastly, not to repress " inquisitive genius," by the oft repeated " it's nothing worth looking at, throw it away, it will dirty the house."

Perhaps, if one's maiden aunts cannot be brought to view with approbation, the introduction into their house of common leeches, met for the first time by overjoyed and inquiring nephew and nieces, in the joy of that discovery imperfectly secured, and found next day loose on the drawing-room rug, yet more of us might view with sympathy St. Augustine's moving plea for youth : " Our sole delight was play ; and for this we were punished by those who yet themselves were doing the like. But the trifling occupations of older people are called ' business,' but those of boys, being really the same, are punished by those elders." \*

The closing words of the chapter *On Toys* sum up admirably the Edgeworths' position :—

" The danger of doing too much in Education is greater even than the danger of doing too little. As the merchants in France answered to Colbert, when he desired to know

\* *Confessions of St. Augustine*, I. ix.

'how he could best assist them,' children might perhaps reply to those who are most officious to amuse them, 'Leave us to ourselves.' "

Perhaps the danger of doing too much is even more apparent in education to-day than when they wrote.

The other matter of interest which remains is their theory of punishments and rewards. Their basis is frankly hedonistic, utilitarian ; nowhere else in the whole book is rationalism of an almost undilutedly pagan strain more obvious and pervasive. In contented confidence, they write : " Punishment is no longer considered except by the ignorant and sanguinary as vengeance from the injured or expiation from the guilty." \*

Why vengeance and expiation are placed on the same level, it is not very easy to see. No doubt, at any rate in civilised theory, we have travelled beyond the idea of vengeance ; but that one must be either sanguinary or ignorant, if, being innocent, one expects expiation from the guilty, or, being guilty, one desires to expiate so far as may be the fault one now confesses, one need not surely admit ? But they assure us that " It would be absurd, after an offence has already been committed, to increase the sum of misery in the world by inflicting pain upon the offender, unless that pain were afterwards to be productive of happiness to society either by preventing the criminal from repeating the offence, or by deterring others from similar enormities." †

They seem unable to conceive the possibility of that real and heart-rending repentance whose desire is to suffer the just punishment which may make some reparation, just to the moral sense of the offender, just to the moral sense of the community. Hedonism seems insensibly to

\* *Essays on Education*, vol. i. p. 288.

† *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 289.

exaggerate the painfulness of pain till it loses all power of imagining even that it has a prophylactic quality. Moreover, like some modern writers, the Edgeworths seem inclined to deny the existence, the reality of Sin. In 1903, Dr. Gore preached a sermon before the University of Oxford on *The Christian Idea of Sin*, in which he argued in effect that Sin is a dread reality, and that it is a false, misleading science which regards it as a survival in civilised man's upward ascent. One short passage shall be inserted here, as a counter-blast, from a man at least as scholarly, as able and as observant as the Edgeworth family taken all together, against the contemptuous repudiation by them of the idea of expiation: "You cannot dare to educate a child in the belief that nothing he may do could have been otherwise. All possibility of moral progress is bound up with the belief in moral freedom. You can give no account on such a theory of the ineradicable consciousness of guilt and shame which belongs to a fairly good man when he has done really wrong, 'the self-contempt, bitterer to drink than blood.' " \*

They really have no grasp of this self-contempt, this insatiable longing to undo the past at the cost of any pain or self-abasement: they cannot pass beyond the idea of "restraining individuals by the recollection of past sufferings from future crimes."

Their whole attitude is baldly, crudely hedonistic: "To secure for his pupil the greatest possible quantity of happiness taking the whole of life must be the wish of the preceptor; this includes everything." †

"This includes everything!" Words written in a Christian country, a country which professes to follow,

\* *The New Theology and the Old Religion*, by the Rt. Rev. the Bishop of Birmingham, p. 224.

† *Essays on Education*, vol. i. p. 290.

whatever else it may reject, the plain commands in the Bible, such as "he that taketh not his cross and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me."

It never seems to dawn upon these well-satisfied people that throughout, they are treating humanity on its lower side: when they urge that children should be trained by pleasure to choose certain things, by pain to avoid them, they observe quietly: "Would you teach a dog or a horse to obey you? Do you not associate pleasure or pain with the things you wish they should practise or avoid." \*

If people can be content to argue like that, they cannot avoid or resist the premise that man is on no higher a moral plane than the dog or the horse. Without such a premise the argument is pointless.

Seemingly, the Edgeworths have no feeling for any distinction between evil and painfulness. Though they talk of "reformation," of "good," yet, down at the bottom, they adhere to their original analysis of the painful as wrong, of the pleasurable as right. No doubt it was the prevailing mode of thought, but it was not universal—Wordsworth's *Ode to Duty* appeared in 1805. That being so, they might, so one would have opined, have thought it just worth while to mention, if only for the purposes of rejection, the non-hedonistic theory, or even the Christian view of non-hedonism.

Not only were the Edgeworths trying to proceed on psychological lines, which, of course, must always rest on human experience, and are futile without that basis, but they prided themselves particularly on adherence to facts of life, not only in philosophy or theory, but in practice. Then, by experience, by facts let them be tried. Whatever people may think about the Christian Saints, and about Christians who have not managed to attain sanctity,

they are and have been real people. They have been, through the course of nineteen centuries, though not a majority yet too numerous to be "accidental," if we know what we mean by the term. On fundamentals they agree, and those fundamentals are ludicrously destructive of the Edgeworths' principle of pleasure and pain. Nor can any "doctrine of probability" condemn them as "cranks," hysterical dreamers: they have been too effective for any such short and easy method. Men and women of shining fame, many of whom have even changed the current of history like St. Paul, Athanasius, and Gregory the Great, like Alfred of England, or St. Louis of France, the Catherines of Siena and Genoa, St. Francis, St. Dominic, St. Ignatius Loyola, St. Thomas Aquinas, that woman of humour and common-sense St. Teresa, Thomas à Kempis, Gérard Groote, Savonarola, John Colet, Erasmus, Laud, Lancelot Andrewes, Pusey, Newman, John of Cronstadt, the Curé d'Ars, with the countless multitudes of men and women who have believed what those believed, who have lived by it, and some of whom have died for it, cannot just be shovelled aside as exceptions; it is only psychology twisted for a very definite purpose that will rule out these millions,—differing in race, place, and time, but agreeing in their view of life and death and all things,—as unworthy of attention, observation, and explanation. Yet of no one of those was happiness in the sense of pleasure the end and aim. To secure happiness was not to them that which "includes everything." Nor was it by any promise of pleasure or avoidance of pain that they won followers, who, though they might and doubtless did attain satisfaction, had their eyes set on no hedonistic goal.

Quite apart from Christianity there are other plain facts of life that will not sort, that cannot be wrested to sort, with any mere pleasure and pain hypothesis. Apart

from any religious prompting some people perform duties which if they are not acutely painful are not in themselves pleasurable, like the performance of dull social duties, addressing election meetings, paying income tax. These things are done because they forward an "end," but the end is neither pleasure nor pain. It is quite true that a dull form of satisfaction closes in when they are done, as a faint sense of annoyance attended the beginning, the anticipation of them. To take one instance, the income tax. Even if a fine did not follow its non-payment, every honest man and woman, from whom it was due, would pay it, either purely from a sense of honesty, or combined with that from the view of common-sense that in a world where something cannot commonly be had for nothing, the person who desires protection must pay for it. It is quite true that rational people do what they do with an eye to something, for which something perhaps the most comprehensive term is "end," or better still "advantage." But to identify every possible "end" or advantage with happiness in the sense of pleasure, is not only to twist but to impoverish both language and thought.

If these be the facts of life, if the adult is to be allowed more "ends" than pleasure, why not the child? Where is the sense of a system of education which proceeds on the assumption that procuring happiness "includes everything"? Why should we reduce the infant "end" to pleasure, the infant bugbear to pain? The mistake underlying the hedonist position is the unacknowledged identification of *desire* and *happiness*. Human beings desire all sorts of ends, military fame, sanctity, commercial success, scholarship, landed possessions, gross comfort; they desire countless different things at different times, in different places. Happiness may or may not accompany the means of their achievement, or crown their attainment. Yet,

what they desire is, not happiness, but one of many various ends, the idea of which end it is which warms and kindles desire. It is this psychological confusion, the mistaking of an "end" for a "state" which underlies the Edgeworths' chill and pedestrian utilitarianism.

It is not wholly without interest perhaps to recall a criticism on Maria Edgeworth's novels, which was uttered by an eminent co-temporary Baptist Minister, Mr. Robert Hall. Of her, he said, she "does not attack religion or inveigh against it; but makes it appear unnecessary by exhibiting perfect virtue without it. No books ever produced so bad an effect on my mind as hers. I did not expect any irreligion there: I was off my guard; their moral character beguiled me. I read volume after volume with eagerness, and the bad effects of them I experienced for months."\*

This wholesale identification of good with material happiness, and evil with material pain, a theory they push to its baldest barest issue, is the salient blot on the Edgeworths' system of education. Locke, though he expressed himself in hedonistic terms, yet in practice desired that children should overcome, not shirk difficulty: he urged that the inherent vice in flogging is its appeal to the natural human hatred and fear of pain, whereas "True Fortitude is" (no avoidance of pain but) "the quiet Possession of a Man's self, and an undisturb'd doing his Duty, whatever Evil besets, or Danger lies in the Way."

As a matter of fact, to bring children up to avoid pain as the worst of all conceivable disasters is to breed up a race incapable of heroism, of self-sacrifice: "If fortitude, courage, patience, endurance, resignation are among the parts of human perfection, it is pain under whose benignant

\* Quoted in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Art. Maria Edgeworth.



severity they have grown—it is pain which has been the schoolmaster who has taught them.” \*

In very truth, the world lies beaten at the feet of the man or woman who is indifferent alike to pleasure and pain: the world may offer its best rewards or threaten its vilest penalties, but he who has by struggle and self-mastery detached himself smiles and passes by. In its perfection, this state is rare: but a measure of it gives a degree of freedom, and every step towards its consummation increases liberty. The most helpless slave in the world is the devotee of pleasure, the coward in the face of pain. Pure hedonism of the Edgeworth type is the poorest, meanest gospel ever proffered to humanity. Mill's hedonism was of another sort. His “pleasure” was so widened, that if one might venture an Hibernianism, it included pain. He could have grasped and appreciated the Martyr's joy, and would have braved it for a principle himself no doubt had it been necessary. His “greatest happiness” is leagues away from the material commonplaceness of the Edgeworths' view. Possibly they would have repudiated the charge that they cared only for material happiness. They may have meant something else, but material happiness is indubitably the impression they convey. Amid much sound sense, and very penetrating observation, still, their care for convention, for the good opinion of Society, for reputation among substantial persons, for solid decency and convenience, tempered perhaps by an educated but unimaginative refinement, appears at every turn.

Enthusiasm, self-sacrifice, soaring aspiration, super-sensual speculation, right for right's sake, are as remote from their comfortable existence, as a deliberate and steady ignoring or a complete and unaware ignorance of one whole side of life could make or keep them.

\* *Pascal and other Sermons.* Dean Church, p. 228.

No one desires to preach some gloomy doctrine of pain for pain's sake: that is a travesty of the Christian hope. But what the Edgeworths could not see, could not even dimly fumble after, is what Father Tyrrell described as pain which is "not merely as a bitterness incidental to the medicine of life, but as itself a medicinal bitterness;"\* equally, they had no faintest inkling of another version of that view, Pope Innocent's:—

"I can believe this dread machinery  
Of sin and sorrow, would confound me else,  
Devised,—all pain, at most expenditure  
Of pain by Who devised pain,—to evolve,  
By new machinery in counterpart,  
The moral qualities of man—how else?—  
To make him love in turn and be beloved,  
Creative and self-sacrificing too,  
And thus eventually, God-like, (ay,  
'I have said ye are Gods,'—shall it be said for nought?)  
Enable man to wring, from out all pain,  
All pleasure for a common heritage  
To all eternity."†

\* *Hard Sayings*. George Tyrrell, S.J., p. 143.

† *The Ring and the Book*. R. Browning. Bk. x. ll. 1375 *et seq.*

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE PHILOSOPHY OF JOHN STUART MILL

**L**IKE John Locke, John Stuart Mill was born and lived in stirring times. The year of his birth was marked by the union of Grenville and Fox to form the ministry of "All the Talents," which lasted some fifteen months. While he was a child, Napoleon was still Europe's great fear: Mill was nine when the battle of Waterloo put an end to that universal dread. But the child's early years were more shielded than Locke's from war's alarms and excursions, his education began almost impossibly soon. It seems incredible, but he himself assures us of the fact, that he began Greek at the age of three, his acquaintance with Latin being deferred till he was eight.

The story of his strange upbringing he has related for us all in the *Autobiography*, related it too without any real apprehension apparently of the startling nature of its facts. It is sufficient to say here that by the time he was eight, he had read the whole of the historian Herodotus, parts of Xenophon, Plato, Diogenes Laertius, Lucian, and Isocrates; Robertson's and Hume's *Histories*; Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*; Watson's *Philip II. and III.*; Hooke's *History of Rome*; two or three translated volumes of Rollin's *Ancient History*; Plutarch's *Lives* (in a translation); Burnet's *History of my Own Time*; James Mill also made him read Millar's *Historical View of the English Government*, Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History*; McCrie's *John Knox*; and a History

of the Quakers. For the child's light reading were provided Anson's *Voyages*; *Robinson Crusoe*; *The Arabian Nights*; *Don Quixote*; Miss Edgeworth's *Popular Tales*, and a few more books of the same intellectual class. It is interesting to know that Mill had direct knowledge thus, in his early years, of the dried-up wisdom of Maria Edgeworth.

There is a quaint touch, suggesting that he was once a boy, as Mill reels off these names; "He" (i.e. James Mill) "also made me read and give him a verbal account of many books which would not have interested me sufficiently to induce me to read them of myself." \*

When he was eleven, Mill started on the task of writing a History of Roman Government. By the time he was twelve, he had read, so he tells us, the principal works of the classical writers.

It is of course a platitude that our own Literature was almost entirely and is still, in the main, excluded from the curriculum of boys. Mill, however, was not kept in complete ignorance here, though his reading was strictly limited by his austere Father's views. James Mill, it appears, did not admire the Plays of Shakspeare, but still he allowed his son to read them. Milton alone won the elder Mill's whole-hearted commendation, "for whom," says his son, "he had the highest admiration." Goldsmith and Burns, with parts of Gray were permitted, the *Bard* being extolled above the *Elegy*. John Mill relates that, contrary to custom, his Father read aloud to him the First Book of the *Færie Queene*, but he confesses he took no pleasure in it. A narrowly limited acquaintance with Dryden and Cowper completed this unsatisfying list, with one addition—Campbell, upon whose poems Mill stumbled in his thirteenth year, apparently by chance. Of *Lochiel*, *Hohenlinden*, and *The Exile of Erin* he says, "they gave me sensations I had

\* *Autobiography*. J. S. Mill, p. 8.

never before experienced from poetry." Long poems, he declared himself unable to appreciate; but he makes an exception in favour of "the striking opening lines of Gertrude of Wyoming, which long kept its place in my feelings as the perfection of pathos." \*

As one reads those opening stanzas it is a little hard perhaps to see the reason of Mill's extreme pleasure. If he disliked long poems, *Lycidas* could not fall under the bane of excessive length, and its charm is greater surely than these rather conventional lines about "happy shepherd swains" feeding their flocks on green declivities, and the not very felicitous comparison of a flamingo

"Disporting like a meteor on the lakes."

Mill's love of natural scenery, "one of the strongest of my pleasurable susceptibilities," as he called it, reached a fuller development later, and he wrote that "Wordsworth would never have had any great effect on me, if he had merely placed before me beautiful pictures of natural scenery. Scott does this still better than Wordsworth, and a very second-rate landscape does it more effectually than any poet." †

It may be that in Mill's youth, *Lycidas* had too much of "states of feeling and of thought coloured by feeling under the excitement of beauty," such as he came to appreciate in Wordsworth under the outward beauty; and the simpler homelier pleasure in natural beauty exhibited by Campbell came as a welcome relief from the *Bard* and *Alexander's Feast*, while it made no over-strong call upon yet dormant capacities.

At the age of twelve, Mill was introduced to Logic by way of mental training. It may not even now be entirely useless to recall his comparison of Logic and Mathematics

\* *Autobiography*, p. 17.

† *Ibid.* p. 147.

as educational instruments : " I am persuaded that nothing in modern education, tends so much, when properly used, to form exact thinkers who attach a precise meaning to words and propositions, and are not imposed on by vague, loose, or ambiguous terms. The boasted influence of mathematical studies is nothing to it ; for in mathematical processes none of the real difficulties of correct ratiocination occur. It is also a study peculiarly adapted to an early stage in the education of philosophical students, since it does not presuppose the slow process of acquiring, by experience and reflexion, valuable thoughts of their own." \*

Perhaps nothing can be much more unprofitable than pitting one class of studies against another. But without doing that, we are bound to admit that methods of training differ in suitability to different minds. And as there are teachers possessed of a vague notion that logic may succeed with certain young people when mathematics have failed palpably, it is not without interest to reflect upon Mill's proffered explanation of a sufficiently obvious fact.

After Logic, followed Economics ; and all this mass of learning, made up of such varied elements, was offered to the child by the time he was thirteen. Is it then very wonderful that Mill should have put it on record that " various persons " who knew him in childhood, found him " greatly and disagreeably self-conceited " ? † Yet James Mill never allowed his son to be a mere stuffed parrot, or to content himself with memory work ; the younger Mill writes emphatically : " He strove to make the understanding not only go along with every step of the teaching, but, if possible, precede it. Anything which could be found out by thinking I never was told until I had exhausted my efforts to find it out for myself." ‡

\* *Autobiography*, p. 19.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 31.

† *Ibid.* p. 33.

Here, the modern student who declines to accept the often proffered principle of the primrose path, who sees in a system of instruction deliberately shorn of every possible difficulty nothing but an instrument for producing unoriginal, debile minds, and spiritless characters incapable of fortitude, here, in this brief sentence of Mill, he may find the key of all training, in the explicit advice never to do for a pupil what that pupil can do for himself, together with the implicit counsel to help when the obstacle is insuperable by solitary unaided effort.

Mill's early education was mainly historical, literary, and philosophical. But at the age of fourteen, he paid his first visit to France, and, in the autumn of the same year (1820), something was done on the side of the Natural Sciences, when at the University of Montpellier he attended, amongst others, courses on chemistry, zoology, and higher mathematics; and it was during this visit no doubt that the seeds were sown of that regard for French thought and French lucidity in the expression of thought which strengthened as life went on. His was a very different education from Locke's at Westminster School and Christ Church. Indeed, James Mill had and bred in his son a regard for the subject-matter of the classics which recalls the enthusiasm of the fifteenth-century Italians. While Vittorino da Feltre with his intense understanding of and love for boys would have been no doubt a saner guide for youth, yet he could hardly have insisted more efficaciously upon the contents of the classics. But, *à propos* of his father's method of compelling the son to read an author aloud, and of his subsequent impatience were the reading bad, *i.e.* without the right *modulation* which James Mill held to be at least as important as either *expression* or *articulation*, John Mill puts his finger on a striking deficiency in his education, for undoubtedly the father was a better philosopher

than a teacher. John Mill complains that while his father gave him rules for reading aloud, told him when he read ill, told him how he should have read, he never, by reading it himself, *showed* me how it ought to be read." \* And then follows the luminous criticism, which many teachers might well take to heart to-day: "A defect running through his otherwise admirable modes of instruction, as it did through all his modes of thought, was that of trusting too much to the intelligibleness of the abstract, when not embodied in the concrete." † One may well wonder whether the son's most admirable habit of offering happy illustration whenever he dealt with an abstract subject was not the outcome of the element which lacked in his father's teaching.

There is a passage in the first chapter of the Autobiography, dealing with Mill's childhood and early education which throws light on his whole intellectual standpoint, viz. his extreme indebtedness to Plato: "There is no author to whom my Father thought himself more indebted for his own mental culture, than Plato, or whom he more frequently recommended to young students. I can bear similar testimony in regard to myself." ‡ He goes on to point out the "unsurpassed discipline" offered by the Platonic Method, the avoidance of errors, the clearing of chaos and obscurity, the close pinning down to the actual point, the pitiless exposition of ignorance and fog; and he concludes thus: "I have felt ever since that the title of Platonist belongs by far better right to those who have been nourished in and have endeavoured to practise Plato's mode of investigation, than to those who are distinguished only by the adoption of certain dogmatical conclusions, drawn mostly from the least intelligible of his works, and which the character of his mind and writings makes it uncertain whether he himself regarded as anything more than poetic fancies or

\* *The Autobiography*, p. 23.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.* p. 21.



philosophic conjectures." \* This passage is instructive, not only on account of its main intention, but on account of its implicit restriction of knowledge to the work of the intellect, and its implicit rejection, in the closing sentence, of imagination and speculation as instruments of acquisition: it is a foretaste of that later insistence of his on the all-importance of rigorous demonstration, that later implication that all knowledge ought to be capable, in the last resort, of proof at any rate akin to that which obtains in the exact sciences; it is a precursor of the neglect of that on which Newman depended so greatly, the illative sense. Perhaps to the end Mill preferred deduction to induction. And here again he holds a kind of middle position between Vittorino da Feltre and Locke. It is difficult to explain this without overstating the point. Because Locke said unblushingly that a gentleman should study the classics because that was "expected of him," people are apt hurriedly to dub him a snob, and to deny that he had any real appreciation of the contents of classic authors. Such people seem unable to grasp the fact that a man might think a certain form of knowledge due to his position, and might also value it in and for itself. But, when that much is admitted, it still remains true that a great difference divides Locke's attitude to the classics from that of the men of the Italian Renaissance. The latter had recovered, in the Classics, a whole philosophy; a science of politics, a theory of metaphysics, a code of morals. As grown men, face to face with the problems of life, particularly confusing problems too, as Europe drew itself slowly, rather fumblingly, from that confusion of light and darkness, of violence and mildness which we call the Middle Ages, the thinkers of the Renaissance found themselves suddenly dowered with the wisdom of antiquity in its original form and dress, a wisdom which was, or could

\* *Autobiography*, p. 22.

easily be rendered, germane to all which they found so puzzling in their own immediate environment. Hence, the enthusiasm, the almost adoring veneration they exhibited for the classics ; hence their insistence on classical training for boys. But as the generations passed away, it happened unfortunately that the boys stuck at the linguistic difficulties, and failed, as a mass, to reach the contents. Enthusiasm waned, and we find Locke, with moderated zeal, preaching that a gentleman should certainly be acquainted with Latin, while of one who aspired to the title of a scholar far more must be expected.

Mill, with his amazing powers of actual acquisition, with an intellect sharpened and polished by the drastic discipline to which he was subjected, stands midway between the Lockian conventional appreciation and da Feltre's enthusiastic admiration. Further, from the point of view of the part played by the understanding, Mill occupies a middle position. All through Vittorino's method of training, the development of the will, the cultivation of the æsthetic sense, the tempering of "dry light" by the glow and warmth of feeling are apparent ; he is very far from relying on pure unadulterated intellect as his only educational instrument. Locke, as has been shown, takes up the position of the extreme rationalist.

Mill's intellectual thoroughness, his determination to get the utmost that is possible out of the human understanding, is apparent in the following passage, which should be a classic utterance to the pedagogue : "A mental habit to which I attribute all that I have ever done, or ever shall do, in speculation : that of never accepting half solutions of difficulties as complete : never abandoning a puzzle, but again and again returning to it until it was cleared up ; never allowing obscure corners of a subject to remain unexplored, because they did not appear important ; never thinking

that I perfectly understood any part of a subject until I understood the whole." \*

Of course taken literally, this is an impossible ideal; who ever understood the whole of anything? But as an ideal, something to be striven for, it is a corrective of our manifold intellectual slovenliness.

But this is only one aspect of his attitude. In the fifth chapter, a part of the *Autobiography* which no one who desires to understand Mill can afford to pass over, he indicates the important changes which came over his opinions when he was about twenty; and the second of these it is which differentiates him from Locke: "I had now learnt by experience that the passive susceptibilities needed to be cultivated as well as the active capacities, and required to be nourished and enriched as well as guided. I did not, for an instant, lose sight of or undervalue, that part of the truth which I had seen before; I never turned recreant to intellectual culture or ceased to consider the power and practice of analysis as an essential condition both of individual and social improvement. But I thought it had consequences which required to be corrected, by joining other kinds of cultivation with it. The maintenance of a due balance among the faculties, now seemed to me of primary importance. The cultivation of the feelings became one of the cardinal points in my ethical and philosophical creed. And my thoughts and inclinations turned in an increasing degree towards whatever seemed capable of being instrumental to that object." †

In the matter of religious feeling, Mill again is clearly marked off from Locke. The latter belonged to that part of the Church in England which professes protestantism; and he had all the ordinary characteristics of his ecclesiastical party. The Edgeworths, in their *Essays on Education*

\* *The Autobiography*, p. 123.

† *Ibid.* p. 143.

exhibit an attitude which can hardly be distinguished from paganism; though probably they regarded themselves as Christians.

James Mill brought up his son without any religion at all. John Mill writes of his father: "Doubtless after many struggles he yielded to the conviction that, concerning the origin of things, nothing whatever can be known. This is the only correct statement of his opinion, for dogmatic atheism he looked upon as absurd: as most of those, whom the world has considered Atheists, have done." \* This is not the place to consider whether James Mill had truly gauged that which he combated, or whether he was merely fighting what he erroneously supposed to be religion. The point is that he claimed to be an Agnostic, and that he brought his son up on those lines, so that the latter could write: "I am one of the very few examples in this country of one, who has, not thrown off religious belief, but who never had it. I grew up in a negative state with regard to it. I looked upon the modern exactly as I did upon the ancient religion, as something which in no way concerned me." †

To any who regard the religious sense as an indigenous element in human nature, this curious closing sentence must seem highly unphilosophical. It is fair, however, to remember that while Mill was not taught the real principles of Christianity—"by one who believed in them," his own prescription for arriving at truth—a loss which was probably irreparable even from the point of view of his public usefulness, yet he was steeped, as few Englishmen have been, in the Ethics of Greece and Rome. He was brought up with an ideal that admittedly ranks very high among human ideals, and that, joined to his own most unusual, most rare mental and moral gifts, carried him through

\* *The Autobiography*, p. 39.

† *Ibid.* p. 43. †

the shoals and shallows of this troublesome world. He sketched his own standard for us: "My father's moral inculcations were at all times mainly those of the 'Socratici viri'; justice, temperance (to which he gave a very extended application), veracity, perseverance, readiness to encounter pain, and especially labour; regard for the public good; estimation of persons according to their merits, and of things according to their intrinsic usefulness; a life of exertion in contradistinction to one of self-indulgent ease and sloth." \*

Lastly, whatever Mill was or was not taught, he had the power of thinking and observing; and few can be ignorant, so often has it been quoted, of his tribute, in the *Three Essays on Religion*, to the Founder of Christianity.

This seems to be a suitable place to consider Mill's *toleration*, a more real thing, surely, than Locke's.

Nowadays, toleration seems often to mean a gelatinous admission that one thing is as good, as true as another, and it issues not seldom in the practical if unconscious and unavowed assumption that contradictory propositions are equally admirable. Whereas, surely, a tolerant person really is one who having done his best to satisfy himself as to the nature of truth, stands up for the result through thick and thin, while all the time he accords to other people the liberty and responsibility of acting likewise. There is a suggestive passage in the *Autobiography*, † where Mill elucidates his father's view that conduct is bad if its consequences are bad, no matter how excellent the intention of the doer, while at the same time an agent with a good motive (however mistaken) is on a wholly different moral plane from an agent with a bad one, or with no motive in particular. If we could drive that distinction in to the common conscience, we might rid ourselves of a great deal

\* *Autobiography*, p. 47.

† Pages 49, 50.

of loose talking, which passes nowadays for beautiful tolerance.

Mill's view of psychology and metaphysics is to be found mainly in his *Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy*, in parts of the *Logic*, and in the *Three Essays on Religion*. Metaphysical and psychological interest has shifted since his time, and, to the student of education, his contribution is not the most valuable portion of his whole mode of thought. Far more which is germane to pedagogy may be found in the famous Essay, *On Liberty*, of which Mill himself said: "None of my writings have been so carefully composed, or so sedulously corrected as this." \*

The theme of the book is *Civil Liberty*, "not the so-called Liberty of the Will, so unfortunately opposed to the misnamed doctrine of Philosophical Necessity." † Of the ethical doctrine of the Freedom of the Will, Dr. Sidgwick wrote in *The Methods of Ethics*, ‡ bringing to bear on that most elusive question his unrivalled faculties of analysis and criticism, leaving his reader if not with a solution—since probably the problem is incapable of verbal solution—yet at any rate with a clear grasp of the real nature of the difficulty.

In his introductory chapter, Mill argued concerning encroachments on liberty, whether by a powerful individual or by a majority; and in connexion with the latter he suggested a fact which the present generation may do very well not to neglect, viz. that the tyranny of a majority may be grosser, more intolerable, than that of any single person, and that it carries within itself a peculiar danger, the greater difficulty of unearthing, of checking it.

The second chapter—Of the Liberty of Thought and Discussion—besides being the core of the book, is also a

\* *Autobiography*, p. 251.

† *On Liberty* (People's Edition), p. 1.

‡ Bk. i. ch. v.

portion of Mill's general philosophy, which, if it be handled rightly, has a direct bearing upon education, upon the whole of the pedagogue's business. His fundamental position is explained in one short passage : " If all mankind minus one were of one opinion, and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind." \*

Perhaps two principles underlie this proposition ; the first being the plea that truth is not to be found by any method of counting heads ; the second that human opinion is of surpassing value ; moreover the second principle seems the more important for the establishment of his theory. If we took this passage alone, with its almost vehement insistence on the value of opinion, and hence on that of human understanding, we might be inclined to rank Mill at once with the thorough-going Lockian Rationalist School. But almost immediately we are pulled up with a jerk, by another passage, which in its outspoken estimate of the average man, is nothing short of startling : " When we consider either the history of opinion, or the ordinary conduct of human life, to what is it to be ascribed that the one and the other are no worse than they are ? Not certainly to the inherent force of the human understanding ; for, on any matter, not self-evident, there are ninety-nine persons totally incapable of judging of it, for one who is capable, and the capacity of the hundredth person is only comparative." † The solution lies in the tempering of one of these underlying propositions by the other ; what Mill really is arguing is that human understanding in some cases is of supreme value, and that therefore any instance of it may be, and cannot rightly be suppressed. Whether he

\* *On Liberty*, p. 10.

† *Ibid.* p. 11.

would go further and argue for some abstract individual right, apart from ability, is not perfectly clear.

Yet, with that explanation, it is still curious, after his emphatic condemnation of ordinary human reason, to find him elevating public discussion, universal disputation, to the position of the test of Truth: "The beliefs which we have most warrant for, have no safeguard to rest on, but a standing invitation to the whole world to prove them unfounded." \* If it be really true, as Mill said, that "on any matter not self-evident there are ninety-nine persons totally incapable of judging it, for one who is capable," then, surely, public general discussion of matters not self-evident is about the most futile way of testing truth that may be devised.

There is another point. It may be rightly desirable that more or less accepted truth should be challenged publicly; but that it can be is surely no ground of any individual conviction. It is exceedingly hard, in a given case, to analyse the precise ground of one's conviction; but I at least cannot feel that I believe a proposition because I know that every one is free to attack it, whether or no they have actually done so. Further, though we may be prepared to admit that freedom of attack is, when fairly conducted, a good thing, that, like a healthy breeze, it keeps the dust from settling too thick, yet we may feel that a breeze need not develop into a tornado: we may even appreciate an occasional windless day.

A more immediately pedagogic suggestion may be found in Mill's dictum: "No one can be a great thinker who does not recognise that as a thinker it is his first duty to follow his intellect to whatever conclusion it may lead." † There again is the rationalist position; Mill apparently forgets, for the moment, that other elements, extra-rational ones, may enter into the search after Truth.

\* *On Liberty*, p. 12.

† *Ibid.* p. 19.



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In one place, he admitted the fact of the complexity of truth: "Truth, in the great practical concerns of life, is so much a question of the reconciling and combining of opposites, that very few have minds sufficiently capacious and impartial to make the adjustment with an approach to correctness." \*

To the students of St. Andrews, Mill supplied a touchstone for intellects: "In what consists the principal and most characteristic difference between one human intellect and another? In the ability to judge correctly of evidence." †

The whole chapter might make a very useful contribution to the theory of the place and development of understanding in the business of education, if it were remembered constantly, that, as in the passage I have quoted, Mill immensely overrated the general utility, *i.e.* the usefulness for normal average persons, of disputation: also that he wrote with his thoughts fixed too exclusively on one class of persons, *viz.* philosophers like himself; and lastly, that he overlooked the endless varieties of human nature, and wrote, far too often, as if the same set of arrangements would practically fit all the dwellers in a given country. Again, he not only overlooked those many differences of education, environment and experience which enable some members of a community to understand the spirit of a proposition as completely as they make others able to misunderstand it, but the presence or absence of humour never seems to occur to him as a most disturbing factor, when we are generalising about human beings; he does not seem to realise that to say a thing to a person with a sense of humour may be entirely wise, to say the same thing to one without may be entirely foolish. Mill's own statements, based on this over-wide generalisation, sometimes show the erroneous nature of the method:

\* *On Liberty*, p. 28.

† *Inaugural Address*, p. 23.

*e.g.* "He who lets the world or his own portion of it, choose his plan of life for him has no need of any other faculty than the ape-like one of imitation." \* Well, by implication he suggests that, for all of us, there is something reprehensible in being "ape-like," in letting others suggest our plan of action. And yet, as a plain matter of fact, there are many people, very many, who feel they are most of all irreprehensible just precisely when they are doing what other people do. Who shall convince them of sin or error?

It would be a most inadequate account of Mill's view of rational liberty which omitted what I suppose is a classic passage in the second chapter: "In the case of any person whose judgment is really deserving of confidence, how has it become so? Because he has kept his mind open to criticism of his opinions and conduct. Because it has been his practice to listen to all that could be said against him; to profit by as much of it as was just; and to expound to himself, and on occasion to others, the fallacy of what was fallacious. Because he has felt that the only way in which a human being can make some approach to knowing the whole of a subject, is by hearing what can be said about it by persons of every variety of opinion, and studying all modes in which it can be looked at by every character of mind. No wise man ever acquired his wisdom in any mode but this; nor is it in the nature of human intellect to become wise in any other manner." †

Perhaps most of us would hardly admit that "no wise man ever acquired his wisdom in any mode but this;" but there is an underlying meaning again in this passage. As we read it carefully, we realise that if a man or woman is going to act in intellectual things according to this plan, then he or she will need qualities which are not only great in themselves, but, in combination, are rare; *e.g.* a devouring

\* *On Liberty*, p. 34.

† *Ibid.* p. 12.

love of truth, an equable temper, great alertness, singular energy, a tolerant mind, keen observation, justice, accuracy.

And though perhaps this more or less hidden meaning is an additional proof that Mill habitually overrated the capacities of average persons, yet it has a great, possibly a growing, importance for educators to-day. When Mill wrote, it was exceedingly necessary to insist on the right of intellectual and political freedom; to-day, to many of us, it may well seem more important to emphasise our individual, and, in some measure, our collective responsibility for the use, for the wise use, of this freedom. And wherever responsibility enters, the educator's business is not far off.

It is not the fact that even now, even in England, we are all politically free; it is still less the fact that we are all intellectually, morally free, and the responsibility for the latter state of affairs rests largely on our own individual shoulders. For perhaps mental and moral freedom is subtler than Mill admitted. He wrote once these amazing words: "There ought to exist the fullest liberty of professing and discussing as a matter of ethical conviction any doctrine, however immoral it may be considered." \* It is quite true that he limits this right in one direction—"Even opinions lose their immunity when the circumstances in which they are expressed are such as to constitute their expression a positive instigation to some mischievous act." †

Are we really prepared to say that opinions are to be professed no matter how ill-equipped, ignorant, vain, shallow the disputants may be, no matter when, where, before whom? so long as no mischievous act ensues. It was a worldly cynical Roman who uttered the maxim which had been called "the supreme rule in education"—*Maxima debetur puero reverentia*. There will surely be much material

\* *On Liberty*, p. 9 (footnote).

† *Ibid.* p. 32.

for consideration in Mill's doctrine of the Liberty of Thought and Discussion for those pedagogues who trouble themselves about intellectual honesty, intellectual thoroughness, and responsibility, as well as about the relations of these. It was a great Teacher who uttered the warning, "Take heed that ye offend not one of these little ones." It was one of Mill's deficiencies surely, that he seemed unaware of the existence of "little ones."

As a moralist and political thinker, Mill was, it is unnecessary to say, a Utilitarian; but his view of the question was carefully weighed, and subtly guarded from the possibility of crude misapprehension: "The creed which accepts as the foundation of morals, utility or the Greatest Happiness Principle, holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness . . . there is no known epicurean theory of life which does not assign to the pleasures of the intellect, of the feelings and imagination, and of the moral sentiments a much higher value as pleasures than to those of mere sensation." \*

It is quite open to admirers of Locke and Edgeworth to argue that they held these opinions. They certainly did not state them so emphatically.

In the *Autobiography* (which was written later than *Utilitarianism*) Mill said: "I never, indeed, wavered in the conviction that happiness is the test of all rules of conduct, and the end of life." †

But when it came to proving the cogency of this "ultimate end," Mill failed; he seems never to have perceived the truth which Dr. Sidgwick elucidated, viz. that the worth of any ultimate end must be an intuition; that "happiness" stands in no better, no more commanding a position than

\* *Utilitarianism*, ch. ii.

† *Autobiography*, p. 142.

virtue or any other end, when it is a question of making good a claim.

Mill fails so oddly, falls so markedly below his ordinary lucidity, in the fourth chapter of *Utilitarianism*, where he tries to advance a proof of the claim of happiness that the passage is worth quoting, to satisfy, as he might say, the devil's advocate: "The only proof capable of being given that an object is visible is that people actually see it. The only proof that a sound is audible is that people hear it; and so of the other sources of our experience. In like manner, I apprehend the sole evidence it is possible to produce that anything is desirable is that people actually desire it." Now *desirable* is at best an ambiguous word: Why he should have apprehended that; why he should have failed to see that visible and audible relate to physical sensations, and desirable to ethical consideration, it is hard to say. How Mill, so clear, so honest, so careful a thinker should have regarded *desirable*, *i.e.* (in its usually accepted sense) *what ought to be desired* as related to *what is desired*, as audible is related to what is heard, who can explain? If he regarded it as meaning simply what *can* be desired, as audible means what *can* be heard, the cogency of his plea drops to the ground. Why he should have thought the following sentence a logical explanation is no less a puzzle: "Each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness therefore a good to the aggregate of all persons." There is no really necessary connexion between the two. An individual may, it is to be feared often does, desire his own happiness without an *arrière pensée* for that of the aggregate. But whether or no he could establish logically the cogency of the greatest happiness theory, Mill must be reckoned as a rationalist intellectually, a utilitarian in Ethics; though his insistence on the value of the feelings and the will tempers the former, and his plea for the greater

importance to pleasure of *quality* than *quantity* makes his hedonism more palatable for example than that of the Edgeworths.

To the student of education the consideration of certain great intellectual and moral qualities displayed by Mill must always, and perhaps specially in our own disturbed age, come with singular interest. The first is his love of Truth, that characteristic which outshone every other possessed by Locke, and which was no less striking in Mill. There are many people who love Truth in theory; but it does not lend itself to facile acquisition. Mill, like Locke, took enormous pains. The chill infallibility of the Edgeworths wholly lacks the winning quality of that tremendous desire for the attainment of truth which shines out in Locke and Mill. On a previous page, I have quoted Mill's account of his method of seeking truth.\* What an ideal it was. How many of the people who say they wish they knew this, that or the other, even recognise the price to be paid; how many would pay it, if they did? It was not an isolated expression of a fleeting desire which Mill thus put into the *Autobiography*. In his Address at St. Andrews, he urged the students to imitate the Greeks and Romans: "To question all things; never to turn away from any difficulty; to accept no doctrine either from ourselves or from other people without a rigid scrutiny by negative criticism; letting no fallacy, no incoherence, or confusion of thought slip by unperceived; above all, to insist on having the meaning of a word clearly understood before using it, and the meaning of a proposition before assenting to it; these are the lessons we learn from the ancient dialecticians." †

Nor did Mill underrate the difficulty and complexity of the search after Truth; late in the *Autobiography* he wrote: "I had learnt from experience that many false

\* P. 172.

† *Inaugural Address*, p. 17.

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opinions may be exchanged for true ones, without in the least altering the habits of mind of which false opinions are the results." \*

It is always dangerous to speculate on what any writer might have thought if he had lived in another age. But it is scarcely rash to surmise that Mill would have considered our sensationalism in literature a serious menace to that habit of mind from which the perception of truth results. Surely, to take one salient instance, he would have urged us to preserve our independence of mind against the violent diatribes, the insistent headlines of a large part of the daily press. As a spectator surveys a row of newspaper contents boards, with their mutually contradictory dogmatism, he may be forgiven if a consoling whisper from his College days seem to sound again in his ears—"of certain propositions it is a fact that both cannot be true, and that both may be false."

The second great characteristic of Mill, surely, in some measure, an outcome of his education, and therefore interesting to educators, is his freedom from the smaller, pettier passions. It may be argued that a later generation can hardly judge in this matter: for after all, few of those of us who write Autobiographies relate therein our minor faults. Yet, among the *Confessions* which have been made public, not even St. Augustine's can transcend Mill's in shining sincerity; had there been smallness in his nature it must have escaped, if it were not described. It so happens, however, that there remains the testimony on this precise point, of one of Mill's friends and disciples, who, led to observe it, no doubt, by personal knowledge of Mill, wrote: "If Mr. Mill's *Autobiography* has no literary grandeur, nor artistic variety, it has the rarer merit of presenting for our contemplation a character that was infested by none of the

\* *Autobiography*, p. 238.

smaller passions." \* If any one desire to discover grounds in the *Autobiography* for this judgment, he may be referred to the closing sentences of the third Chapter. If any man will scrutinise his own experience, which, after all, is the sound psychological method, he will, even though his sphere of life be restricted, perceive the havoc wrought by small jealousies, petty envies, careless statements, inaccurate guesses, unkind gratuitous criticism ; and perceiving that, we realise how profoundly important was Mill's freedom from such tainting faults. Once more, we cannot omit his strenuousness. I suppose no man ever lived his life with more sustained effort and activity than Mill. One cannot even dream of him as idle, unemployed. Apart from all that mass of philosophical composition, much of it pioneer work, there lay those thirty-five years of active life as an official of the East India Company ; he himself tells us with that quiet self-appraisal, which, avoiding bombast on the one side and insincere depreciation on the other, comes as near perhaps to genuine humility as humanity can attain, what was his fortune as an official : " I was in a few years qualified to be and practically was, the chief conductor of the correspondence with India in one of the leading departments, the Native States." † Very many years later, he wrote, " In 1856, I was promoted to the rank of chief of the office in which I had served for upwards of thirty-three years. The appointment, that of Examiner of Correspondence, was the highest next to that of the Secretary in the East India Company's home service, involving the general superintendence of all the correspondence with the Indian Governments, excepting the military, naval, and financial." ‡

Closely connected with Mill's strenuousness was his

\* *Miscellaneous*. John Morley, vol. iii. p. 58.

† *Autobiography*, p. 82.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 249.



unquenchable sense of responsibility, which perhaps comes out nowhere more emphatically than in the fine warning to the St. Andrews' students: "Let not any one pacify his conscience by the delusion that he can do no harm if he takes no part and forms no opinion. Bad men need nothing more to compass their ends than that good men should look on and do nothing. He is not a good man who, without a protest, allows a wrong to be committed in his name, and with the means which he helps to supply, because he will not trouble himself to use his mind on the subject. It depends on the habit of attending to and looking into public transactions, and on the degree of information and solid judgment respecting them that exists in the community, whether the conduct of a nation as a nation, both within itself and towards others, shall be selfish, corrupt and tyrannical, or rational and enlightened, just, and noble." \*

Lastly, in this summary of Mill's most excellent gifts, we must reckon his optimistic endurance, a rare combination. "The union of boundless patience with unshaken hope was one of Mr. Mill's most conspicuous distinctions," † wrote Mr. John Morley; and again, "He could hope for the future without taking his eye from the qualities of the present." ‡ This attitude of careful observation of the present combined with valiant hope for the future distinguished him in youth, remained with him through the dull, trying years of middle age, that period when so many lose elasticity, and was his still in the later years of full maturity. "His courage was not of the spurious kinds arising from anger, or ignorance of the peril, or levity, or a reckless confidence. These are all very easy. His distinction was that he knew all the danger to himself; was anxious to save pain to others, was buoyed up by no rash

\* *Inaugural Address*, p. 36.

† *Miscellanies*, vol. iii. p. 77.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

hope that the world was to be permanently bettered at a stroke, and yet, for all this, he knew how to present an undaunted front to a majority." \*

Mill himself attributed this capacity for reasoned accommodation to his official experience at the East India Company's Office : " I learnt how to obtain the best I could when I could not obtain everything ; instead of being indignant and disturbed, when I could not have entirely my own way, to be pleased and encouraged when I could have the smallest part of it ; and when even that could not be, to bear with complete equanimity the being overruled altogether." †

Surely a man whom life educated to that rare pitch should not be left entirely outside the ordinary pedagogue's ordinary range of interest.

In the course of his existence, Mill attained to something even beyond that. That desolating experience, seeing changes long desired fail of their expected effect, was his : " In England, I had seen and continued to see many of the opinions of my youth obtain general recognition, and many of the reforms in institutions, for which I had through life contended, either effected or in course of being so. But these changes had been attended with much less benefit to human well-being than I should formerly have anticipated." ‡

Now this state of things must be familiar to every one who busies himself in the amelioration of human affairs. The quality which differentiates Mill, who goes quietly on hoping, from those who wring their hands and sit upon the ground and talk of worms, is his philosophic recognition of the cause combined with his quenchless faith in the possible and progressive education of mankind. These changes which failed, did so, he assures us, " because they

\* *Miscellaneous*, p. 43.

† *Ibid.* p. 238.

‡ *Autobiography*, p. 85.

had produced very little improvement in that which all real amelioration in the lot of mankind depends on, their intellectual and moral state." \*

Again he writes, following out the same line of reflexion : " I had learnt from experience that many false opinions may be exchanged for true ones without in the least altering the habits of mind of which false opinions are the result." †

It was this conviction of the necessity for dealing with the mind combined with his belief that the mind could be persistently and progressively dealt with that gave Mill his interest in education, which elaborated itself in the St. Andrews Address, a little book marvellously overlooked, but worth infinitely more than nine-tenths of the volumes which lumber our educational shelves.

Mr. Morley remarked that Mill was stamped in many respects with specially English quality." ‡ He reckoned him as the latest example of " a distinctively English School of Philosophy . . . the school whose method subordinates imagination to observation." §

No serious student of Mill could gainsay these judgments. But as Professor William James once remarked, though all men resemble each other in fundamentals, yet all the interest of life lies in the margin of differences, minute though they may be ; for ever, Browning's line is true—

" Our interest's on the dangerous edge of things."

It is also on those edges which are not dangerous but are differentiating. Mill owed to his early education in Platonism his regard for the feelings as an element in human life. He owed to his stay in France that admiration of the French nation so uncharacteristic of the English Middle Class ; he owed to his admiration of the French his lucidity

\* *Autobiography*, p. 229.

‡ *Miscellaneous*, vol. iii. p. 40.

† *Ibid.*

§ *Ibid.*

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of expression, his care for apt illustration, and finally his regard for intuition which latter was greater than a passage in the *Inaugural Address* might lead us to suppose.\* He was an intellectual hybrid in whom the culture of Greece and Rome, the light and grace of France, the solid seriousness of early nineteenth-century England met *and blended*. And because he was that Mr. Morley was justified in passing upon him the high encomium—"He satisfied the ingenious moral ardour which is instinctive in the best natures until the dust of daily life dulls or extinguishes it, and at the same time he satisfied the rationalistic qualities which are not less marked in the youthful temperament of those who by and by do the work of the world." †

\* *Inaugural Address*, p. 23.

† *Miscellanies*, vol. iii. p. 41.

## CHAPTER IX

### MILL'S VIEW OF EDUCATION

"THE worth of the State," Mill told us in the *Essay on Liberty*, "in the long run, is the worth of the individuals composing it." Locke's readers will remember that he asserted of us all that we owe the main part of what we really are to our upbringing. If these two statements be true, then the paramount importance of education, both to the nation collectively and individually, cannot be gainsaid.

Mill's most weighty contribution to the Science of Education is the *Inaugural Address* to the Students of St. Andrews. Besides this, there are two important passages in the *Autobiography*. In the first chapter, he analyses the causes of his own educational advantages, a condition which he summarised neatly in the phrase: "Through the early training bestowed on me by my father, I started, I may fairly say, with an advantage of a quarter of a century over my contemporaries." \*

He definitely asserts that he was not "extremely quick of apprehension," nor possessed of "a very accurate and retentive memory"; he denies having been "of a remarkably active and energetic character, in all these natural gifts I am rather below than above par." †

The causes to which he attributes all success to which he attained are the predominance of training over instruction,

\* *Autobiography*, p. 30.

† *Ibid.*

the settled plan of making "the understanding not only go along with every step of the teaching, but, if possible, precede it;" and the deliberate substitution of "what are considered the higher branches of education" for "the modicum of Latin and Greek commonly taught to school-boys."

We must try, I suppose, to believe Mill when he says he was not extraordinarily gifted: but we cannot imagine that such a plan of education, of deliberately ignoring the capacities of youth, and of forcing a growing mind into adult ways would succeed, I will not say universally, but even often. What Mill omitted to notice, and it must have been one of the main saving factors in the situation, was that his was Montaigne's case of "a tutor apiece." Again, and very important, even Locke could hardly have found a more conscientious and devoted tutor. Not that Mill's austere and exacting parent could have extracted all that from most of us: but, however we may explain or fail to explain it, the fact is palpable, he suited his son.

Mill, throughout the *Autobiography*, does not once mention his Mother; but his Father is treated with awe, reverence, and "loyal devotion"—to use the phrase he put in affection's place—which nothing had the power to blight. "As far as I can trust my remembrance, I acquitted myself very lamely in this department" (*i.e.* of self-helping reflexion), "my recollection of such matters is almost wholly of failures, hardly ever of success." When he recalls the facts that in his thirteenth year he made his father angry by failing to explain the nature of an "idea," and by the rash remark that "something was true in theory, but required correction in practice," his philosophically pathetic comment is: "In this he seems, and perhaps was, very unreasonable; but I think only in being angry at my failure." This attitude to parental authority may astonish

a good many people, especially the younger portion of the community, only one hundred years, and less, after Mill exercised, without so much as a question, this amazing patience.

The other passage in the *Autobiography* deals with the treatment of difficulty. So much has been done, and is being done, to ruin the race by easing its path, that I can scarcely do better than quote Mill's words intact: "I do not believe that boys can be induced to apply themselves with vigour, and what is so much more difficult, with perseverance, to dry and irksome studies by the sole force of persuasion and soft words. Much must be done, and much must be learnt, by children, for which rigid discipline and known liability to punishment are indispensable as means.\* It is, no doubt, a very laudable effort in modern teaching, to render as much as possible of what the young are required to learn, easy and interesting to them. But when this principle is pushed to the length of not requiring them to learn anything *but* what has been made easy and interesting, one of the chief objects of education has been sacrificed. I rejoice in the decline of the old brutal and tyrannical system of teaching, which, however, did succeed in enforcing habits of application; but the new, as it seems to me, is training up a race of men who will be incapable of doing anything which is disagreeable to them. I do not, then, believe that fear, as an element in education, can be dispensed with; but I am sure it ought not to be the main element." †

Whether Mill would consider the still more modern

\* Mill omits the point, which Miss Edgeworth made, and which would have rendered his argument philosophically complete and practically sound; viz., that punishment should be the *natural* consequence of wrong doing. Nature does, as a matter of fact, "make the punishment" (and the reward) "fit the crime," a point wherein too many educators fail.

† *Autobiography*, pp. 52, 53.

developments of these primrose paths "laudable" is, at any rate, doubtful: but we cannot doubt his dismay if he could return and see the sway which pleasure and sensationalism exercise over a very large section, a section recruited from every social class, of his countrymen. Like Galiani, he perceived that education is worth more than instruction; that moral and intellectual demeanour far outweigh acquisition; but he did not, therefore, like some extravagant practitioners, pour scorn on facts, forego instruction, and leave everything vague and undetermined. If "balance" be needed anywhere it is surely in the framing of educational theories and in their practical application; and "balance" Mill possessed in a remarkable degree.

Those who doubt the use, or the possibility even of a Science of Education might, with advantage, reflect on Mill's view of the scope of Education, as he proclaimed it to the St. Andrews' Students: "Education, moreover, is one of the subjects which most essentially require to be considered by various minds, and from a variety of points of view. For, of all many-sided subjects, it is the one which has the greatest number of sides. Not only does it include whatever we do for ourselves, and whatever is done for us by others, for the express purpose of bringing us somewhat nearer to the perfection of our nature; it does more: in its largest acceptance, it comprehends even the indirect efforts produced on character and on the human faculties, by things of which the direct purposes are quite different; by laws, by forms of government, by the industrial arts, by modes of social life; nay, even by physical facts not dependent on human will; by climate, soil, and local position. Whatever helps to shape the human being; to make the individual what he is, or hinder him from being what he is not—is part of his education." \*

\* *Inaugural Address*, p. 3.



He opened his remarks to these students by considering the function of a university. He admits that on "what mathematicians would call the higher limit," \* but the deficiency in the curricula of the schools of his day obliged him to consider the "lower limit" which it might be called upon to supply: "Before we restrict an University to this highest department of instruction—before we confine it to teaching not knowledge but the philosophy of knowledge—we must be assured that the knowledge itself has been acquired elsewhere." †

As a matter of fact, it is difficult to part rigidly knowledge from the philosophy of knowledge: for one thing, it is not possible that every generation of students, or all students in any given generation will stand on the same precise level of attainment, therefore a fixed standard of teaching becomes a chimera. A great part of the teacher's skill will exhibit itself in his nice appreciation of his class, in his apt apportionment of pure instruction, and speculative suggestion. For these matters there are no fixed rules; though, too often, there is applied to them an all-embracing, unaware neglect. A large part of Mill's *Address* is occupied with a question which is still the crux of the education battle, viz. the relative spheres of the Arts and Sciences. But before entering on that, Mill's more general philosophical point, which he mingles with the question of "classics v. the physical sciences," may be noticed. He said, "I am amazed at the limited conception which many educational reformers have formed to themselves of a human being's power of acquisition." ‡ Perhaps with this might be compared a passage from the *Autobiography*. "A pupil from whom nothing is ever demanded which he cannot do, never does

\* *Inaugural Address*, p. 4.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 7.

† *Ibid.* p. 6.

all he can." \* No one need run hastily away and accuse Mill of desiring to overwhelm infancy with insuperable difficulties. An occasional failure is wholesome tonic to strong natures ; there are very very few to whom such a thing is entirely noxious. No writer can lay down precise regulations ; the science of Education can never be " exact," its conclusions must always be liable to qualification by circumstances.

Mill notes a corollary from this tendency to underrate human capacity. If, so he argues, we will persist in narrowing our conceptions of human intellectual power, how, he asks, are we to avoid sterilising specialisation ? " In every generation, and now more rapidly than ever, the things which it is necessary that somebody should know are more and more multiplied. Every department of knowledge becomes so loaded with details, that one who endeavours to know it with minute accuracy must confine himself to a smaller and smaller portion of the whole extent. Every science and art must be cut up into sub-divisions, until each man's portion, the district which he thoroughly knows, bears about the same ratio to the whole range of useful knowledge that the art of putting on a pin's head does to the field of industry." †

The dangers of specialisation are no bogey of Mill's private manufacture. The division of labour in the industrial world, however essential to the increase of the whole commercial output, has been obtained indisputably at the expense of many individuals, whose lives have been condemned to a devastating monotony. Mill's remedy for such an event in the intellectual world is twofold. First, he says, let us rid ourselves of this wretchedly low estimate of our powers of learning and knowing, " this strangely limited estimate of what it is possible for human beings to

\* P. 32.

† *Inaugural Address*, p. 9.

learn ; " secondly, let us rid ourselves of the assumption that because we cannot know all about everything, therefore we are justified in knowing nothing about most things. He recalls aptly, to the general recollection, Archbishop Whateley's common-sense observation : " To have a general knowledge of a subject is to know only its leading truths, but to know these not superficially but thoroughly, so as to have a true conception of the subject in its great features ; leaving the minor details to those who require them for the purposes of their special pursuit. There is no incompatibility between knowing a wide range of subjects up to this point, and some one subject with the completeness required by those who make it their principal occupation." \* No doubt more words have been spent on this problem by other writers, but have the claims of general outlines and specialised detailed acquaintance ever been more sanely adjusted ? The man who declines to narrow his life to the confines of a part of a portion of a subject, may comfort himself on Mill's plan, and feel that he need not necessarily be a smatterer nor a dabbler.

To return to the age-long strife between the Humanities and the Physical Sciences. Mill's words have the kind of refreshment of some deep clear pool discovered suddenly in an arid place : " This question whether we should be taught the classics or the sciences, seems to me, I confess, very like a dispute whether painters should cultivate drawing or colouring, or to use a more homely illustration, whether a tailor should make coats or trousers. I can only reply by the question, why not both ? Can anything deserve the name of a good education which does not include literature and science, too ? If there were no more to be said than that scientific education teaches us to think, and literary education to express our thoughts,

\* *Inaugural Address*, p. 10.

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do we not require both ? and is not any one a poor, maimed, lopsided fragment of humanity who is deficient in either ? We are not obliged to ask ourselves whether it is more important to know the languages or the sciences. Short as life is, and shorter still as we make it by the time we waste on things which are neither business, nor meditation, nor pleasure, we are not so badly off that our scholars need be ignorant of the laws of the world they live in ; or our scientific men destitute of poetic feeling and artistic cultivation." \*

It is possible to criticise Mill's view of the several functions of literature and science ; but we cannot but respect the cool common-sense which declines to give up any part of our human heritage. He proceeds to demonstrate the utility of knowing languages other than our own vernacular. The first advantage he claims is purely linguistic ; he urges that we thereby learn the true, more hidden meanings of our own language, when we encounter cognate words in others : use has staled our own tongue to us, we accept words without even thinking of their more subtle significance ; but translation, the comparative study of languages, puts a stop to loose use. In studying the literatures of other nations, we widen our ideas not only of language but of thoughts, feelings, characters, ways of acting, and then Mill drives home his conclusion : " If it is so useful, on this account, to know the language and literature of any other cultivated and civilised people, the most valuable of all to us in this respect are the languages and literature of the ancients. No nations of modern and civilised Europe are so unlike one another, as the Greeks and Romans are unlike all of us : yet without being, as some Orientals are, so totally dissimilar that the labour of a life is required to enable us to understand

\* *Inaugural Address*, p. 7.

them. . . it is part of the great worth to us of our Greek and Latin studies, that in them we do read history in the original sources. We are in actual contact with contemporary minds ; \* we are not dependent on hearsay ; we have something by which we can test and check the representations and theories of modern historians." †

Mill proceeds to insist on the use and value of grammar, not grammar in the broad sense of the Middle Ages, when it included almost all knowledge, but on accidence and syntax : and specially he urges the value of the grammar of Greek and Latin : " The distinctions between the various parts of speech, between the cases of nouns, the moods and tenses of verbs, the function of particles, are distinctions in thought, not merely in words. . . . The structure of every sentence is a lesson in logic. The various rules of syntax oblige us to distinguish between the subject and predicate of a proposition, between the agent and the action, and the thing acted upon ; . . . in these qualities the classical languages have an incomparable superiority over every modern language, and over all languages, dead or living, which have a literature worth being generally studied." ‡

There is an obvious tendency nowadays to belittle grammar as a school subject : what should be depreciated is the often disastrous, slovenly methods of handling, I will not say of teaching, it.

It is possible that some may think Mill pays too little attention to the business of acquiring modern languages. It is quite true that he declares that " No one in our age

\* Mill does not seem to realise that this is not peculiar to Greece and Rome : it is as true of all authors of times and places other than our own : Ludovico Sforza's letter to the students of Pavia, *s.g.* shows us the thoughts of a contemporary mind,

† *Inaugural Address*, pp. 13, 14, 15.

‡ *Ibid.* pp. 15, 16.

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can be esteemed a well-instructed person who is not familiar with at least the French language, so as to read French books with ease ; and there is great use in cultivating a familiarity with German." \*

Those who are conscious of the rise of a superior smile at Mill's view of German may reflect that, when he wrote, German had not shown itself to be so essential as most people feel it to be to-day. Yet, undoubtedly, he overlooks some aspects of the modern languages question, specially the scientific aspect. Perhaps to a Philologist the utter inferiority of the Teutonic, and of the languages derived from Latin, as compared with Greek and Latin is not so absolute as it seemed to Mill, who, after all, treats French and German rather on the plan which Matthew Arnold condemned when he giped at those who are satisfied if they can ask for a bun in Italian. Mill's view has truth in it, no doubt, but is surely overstated : " Living languages are so much more easily acquired by intercourse with those who use them in daily life ; a few months in the country itself, if properly employed, go so much further than as many years of school lessons ; that it is really waste of time for those to whom that easier mode is attainable, to labour at them with no help but that of books and masters : and it will in time be made attainable, through international schools and colleges, to many more than at present. Universities do enough to facilitate the study of modern languages, if they give a mastery over that ancient language which is the foundation of most of them, and the possession of which makes it easier to learn four or five of the continental languages than it is to learn one of them without it," †

Mill proceeds to dwell on the extreme value of the classics, first from the point of view of literary style :

\* *Inaugural Address*, p. 11.

† *Ibid.* p. 11.

"The secret of the style of the great Greek and Roman authors, is that it is the perfection of good sense. In the first place, they never use a word without a meaning, or a word which adds nothing to the meaning. They always (to begin with) had a meaning; they knew what they wanted to say; and their whole purpose was to say it with the highest degree of exactness and completeness, and bring it home to the mind with the greatest possible clearness and vividness." \*

And then, in a passage which deliberately allots to Science a place in modern Education, which, owing to its non-development in classical times it could not obtain then, and of which it was impossible for classic authors to dream, he still urges the supreme value of the classics, a value which modern science has not lessened, which no advance in modern science can ever lessen, because the planes are distinct: "The superiority of the literature itself, for purposes of education, is still more marked and decisive. Even in the substantial value of the matter of which it is the vehicle, it is very far from having been superseded. The discoveries of the ancients in science have been greatly surpassed, and as much of them as is still valuable loses nothing by being incorporated in modern treatises: but what does not so well admit of being transferred bodily, and has been very imperfectly carried off even piece-meal, is the treasure which they accumulated of what may be called the wisdom of life: the rich store of experience of human nature and conduct, which the acute and observing minds of those ages, aided in their observations by the greater simplicity of manners and life, consigned to their writings, and most of which retains all its value." †

Then, for all the world as if Mill had been, not a

\* *Inaugural Address*, p. 18.

† *Ibid.* p. 16.

philosopher and political thinker, but a schoolmaster, comes the practical advice—what shall we do in our actual schools, with real boys, about these vaunted classics?

"The same reasons which vindicate the place of classical studies in general education, show also the proper limitation of them. They should be carried as far as is sufficient to enable the pupil, in after life, to read the great works of ancient literature with ease. Those who have leisure and inclination to make scholarship, or ancient history, or general philology their pursuit, of course require much more; but there is no room for more in general education." \*

While fully admitting the utility of composition in a foreign tongue, Mill ruthlessly rules out, for ordinary persons, original composition in Latin and Greek: "If that can be called original which unfortunate schoolboys, without any thoughts to express, hammer out on compulsion from mere memory, acquiring the pernicious habit, which a teacher should consider it one of his first duties to repress, that of merely stringing together borrowed phrases." †

He concludes the matter thus: "Technicalities . . . are essential for criticising a poem, but not for enjoying it. All that is wanted is sufficient familiarity with the language, for its meaning to reach us without any sense of effort, and clothed with the associations on which the poet counted for producing his effect. Who ever has this familiarity, and a practised ear, can have as keen a relish of the music of Virgil and Horace, as of Gray, or Burns, or Shelley, although he know not the material rules of a common Sapphic or Alcaic." ‡

Mill has extremely definite views about History: "An University is indeed the place where the student should be introduced to the Philosophy of History: where Professors

\* *Inaugural Address*, p. 19.

† *Ibid.* p. 20.

‡ *Ibid.*



who not merely know the facts, but have exercised their minds on them, should initiate him into the causes and explanation, so far as within our reach, of the past life of mankind in its principal features." \*

This, it is perhaps needless to say, is the spirit in which every branch of History, including that of Education, should be studied. The facts must be acquired, of course but not merely for their own sake, rather for the sake of their meaning. Towards the end of his address, Mill insists on this point again: "The leading facts of ancient and modern history should be known by the student from his private reading; if that knowledge be wanting, it cannot possibly be supplied here. What a Professor of History has to teach is the meaning of those facts." †

It ought not to be necessary to point out that Mill did not mean the student is to acquire facts unaided, and that the Professor is to do his thinking for him. But it is reasonable to suppose that the Professor's greater age, experience, and wider knowledge made him able to suggest explanations, frame hypotheses, diagnose causes in a manner which yet will not relieve the pupil from all trouble of reflexion and thought. Professors and pupils alike might do worse than read Mill's elaboration of the plain sentence, quoted above; learn their respective duty, and do it. When Mill comes to speak of the use of Science, *i.e.* of Physical Science, he again sub-divides his problem: he urges its utility on the ground of its actual power of giving information, which, at the same time, he argues, is its smallest contribution. Its supreme value, in his eyes, is that he regards it as the method by which we learn to "discriminate truth." ‡ It is surely true that Mill fails to admit that canons of evidence are not quite identical in all subjects, he writes:

\* *Inaugural Address*, p. 11.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 31.

† *Ibid.* p. 33.

"There are but two roads by which truth can be discovered; observation and reasoning: observation, of course, including experiment." \*

Now, some discernment of truth (discernment may differ from discovery) depends on the handling of testimony. Observation enters into that process, but does not wholly constitute it. Mill really meant that the methods of the exact sciences would teach us truth in the inexact ones, for he wrote: "We all require the ability to judge between the conflicting opinions which are offered to us as vital truths; to choose what doctrines we will receive in the matter of religion, for example; to judge whether we ought to be Tories, Whigs, or Radicals, or to what length it is our duty to go with each; to form a rational conviction on great questions of legislation and internal policy, and on the manner in which our country should behave to dependencies and to foreign nations. And the need we have of knowing how to discriminate truth, is not confined to the larger truths. All through life it is our most pressing interest to find out the truth about all the matters we are concerned with. If we are farmers we want to find out what will truly improve our soil; if merchants, what will truly influence the markets of our commodities; if judges, or jurymen, or advocates, who it was that truly did an unlawful act, or to whom a disputed right truly belongs. Every time we have to make a new resolution or alter an old one, in any situation in life, we shall go wrong unless we know the truth about the facts on which our resolution depends. Now, however different these searches for truth may look, and however unlike they really are in their subject-matter, the methods of getting at truth, and the tests of truth, are in all cases much the same." †

\* *Inaugural Address*, p. 31.

† *Ibid.* p. 32.

Now, as a matter of fact, are they? For example, subsequent events have shown that Ricardo who tried to reason about economics as if it were an exact science dealing with machines has had to be discarded in the main; while Mill still retains a large measure of his old influence, because there was a vein in him of the more inexact methods which are proper to the human studies. His division between the Humanities and the Material Sciences was deliberate: "The processes by which truth is attained, reasoning and observation, have been carried to their greatest known perfection in the physical sciences. As classical literature furnishes the most perfect types of the art of expression, so do the physical sciences of the art of thinking." \*

Perhaps his over rigid distinction of function is the most serious blemish in Mill's educational theory; he redeemed it largely by insisting on the importance both of the Humanities and Science, on the futility of pitting one against the other, on the folly of supposing human powers incapable of dealing with them both. His discussion of the functions of mathematics and logic will be found on pages 25 to 28 of the *Inaugural Address*. The former, he regards as the branch of learning which furnishes "the great conclusive example of what can be done by reasoning;" † while he urges that "those physical sciences which are not mathematical, such as chemistry, and purely experimental physics, show us in equal perfection the other mode of arriving at certain truth, by observation, in its most accurate form, that of experiment." ‡

And then he deals with the use of that study upon which he always laid so great emphasis, logic: "Logic is the intellectual complement of mathematics and physics.

\* *Inaugural Address*, p. 22.

† *Ibid.* p. 24.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 23.

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great Italian painters would have filled the place they did in the European mind, would have been universally ranked among the greatest men of their time, if their productions had done nothing for it but to serve as the decoration of a public hall or a private *salon*? Their Nativities and Crucifixions, their glorious Madonnas and Saints, were to their susceptible countrymen the great school, not only of devotional, but of all the elevated and all the imaginative feelings." \*

Those who remember the account of Mill's mood of depression when he was about twenty, a mood induced probably by mental overstrain, who remember the relief he obtained at last from Wordsworth's poems (Byron's having failed entirely), "They seemed to be the very culture of the feelings which I was in quest of. . . . And I felt myself at once better and happier as I came under their influence," † will realise that Mill's exordium on poetry at St. Andrews was no empty lip-service, no conventional rhetoric because it was expected, but the outcome of experience, the expression of a gratitude at once real and deep. He makes an addition which might not have appealed to Locke and the Edgeworths, one for which Wordsworth and his co-temporaries had paved the way. "The power of natural scenery addresses itself to the same region of human nature which corresponds to art." ‡

The observation about the Italian painters marks Mill off from the sense-rationalists pure and simple. He did not profess religious faith, but he could appreciate it. He could never have been guilty of those blundering remarks which Locke perpetrated on the subject of continental catholicism. He did not, could not regard the

\* *Inaugural Address*, pp. 44, 43.

† *Autobiography*, p. 148.

‡ *Inaugural Address*, p. 43.

underlying sentiment of the world's great pictures as some modern rationalists seem to do. It is, perhaps, not impertinent to remark that in Mr. John Morley's *Essay on Robespierre*, there occur some remarks about the Catholic Faith, which show that, like his master, Mill, he could appreciate the spirit of that which he did not share.\*

I have never seen Mill's *Inaugural Address* mentioned in any syllabus offered for the direction of the reading of intending teachers. I cannot, however, divest myself of the conviction that it is at least as worthy as any educational treatise written during the nineteenth century to be introduced to their notice, and far more so than many, which they have, under compulsion, read. For, after all, Mill with his wide knowledge and wider sympathy has, after the chill of the eighteenth century, kindled again that glow which lighted and warmed the fifteenth century. To the literary enthusiasm of the Renaissance, he has added that precision of thought, that esteem for physical science which is so marked a modern trait: and so he avoids annoying the literary person as the pure scientist is apt to do when he writes of the humanities, and does not tread on the corns of the scientific world as the merely classical person does when he ventures to dogmatise in the region of the exact sciences: "Can anything," Mill asked, "deserve the name of a good education which does not include literature and science too?"

Perhaps some day a selection will be made from the vast literature of education of those thinkers who "took all knowledge for their province," and from that shining band over whom Plato will reign, and among whom Vittorino da Feltre and Richard Mulcaster will come to their own, John Stuart Mill will not be excluded.

\* *Miscellanies*, vol. i. p. 105.

## CHAPTER X

### THE LACUNÆ IN RATIONALIST EDUCATION

**N**OWHERE perhaps does the Philosophy of the Sensational-Rationalist School, particularly of the eighteenth century and since, fail more conspicuously than in the almost total neglect, and that in the supposed interests of Reason, of the Feelings ; consequently in the practical omission of that ineradicable factor in human life, Love.

A natural outcome of this depreciation of the Feelings is the poverty of religious insight, and, more oddly, since in it there is a distinctly sensuous element, the lack of appreciation of Beauty ; both of which are conspicuous in Locke and the Edgeworths, and to a considerable, though not equal, extent in Mill. By religious insight, I do not mean sundry references to the Scriptures, nor to the greatness of the Creator, nor Locke's care not to give alms to those who failed in attendance at Church on Sunday : I mean what the words properly mean.

Poverty of religious insight can be treated with the general problem of the depreciation of Feeling. The question of the value of Beauty as an educational factor can be dealt with better by itself.

"Dry light," wrote Francis Bacon, misquoting slightly Heraclitus, "is ever the best." \* Is it ? It is easy and obvious enough to inveigh against sentimentalism, to scorn

\* *Essays*, xxvii. Of knowledge.

shallow emotionalism, to distrust the distortions and exaggerations of passion. But those things, though admittedly the deadly foe of Reason, are at least equally the destruction of noble feeling and genuine love.

The Rationalist's forgetfulness or wilful neglect is a remarkable thing. As he rules out Feelings and thrusts Love aside, he seems entirely oblivious of that doctrine—not for an age, but for all time, which maintains that Love itself is an instrument, even in certain spheres, the instrument of, the way to knowledge. As he declares that "dry light is ever the best," he appears unaware of a further fact, that this theory of Love being an instrument of knowledge does, when acted upon, produce wonderful results, here and now, in the life of men: and he seems equally unconscious of the fact that knowledge which is the fruit of unaided Reason has not always commended itself to wise and good men. For example, one may recall the words of Master Hugh Latimer, a man of such general views about religion as might have commended themselves to an admirer of Protestantism like Locke, when he said: "Men, the more they know, the worse they be; it is truly said *scientia inflat*, 'knowledge maketh us proud and causeth us to forget all, and set away discipline.' Surely, in popery they had a reverence, but now we have none at all."\* He hardly seems to have agreed with Bacon about that "Dry light." The evidence of human belief in this theory about love is plentiful, and scattered through the ages.

We may turn to Greece, and recall the passage in the *Symposium* where Socrates questions "Diotima of Mantinea, a woman wise in this and many other kinds of knowledge":

"'What then is love?' I asked. 'Is he mortal?'

\* Sermon before Edward VI., April 19, 1549.

'No.' 'What then?' 'As in the former instance, he is neither mortal nor immortal, but in a mean between the two.' 'What is he then, Diotima?' 'He is a great spirit (*daimon*), and, like all spirits, he is intermediate between the divine and the mortal.' 'And what,' I said, 'is his power?' 'He interprets,' she replied, 'between gods and men, conveying to the gods the prayers and sacrifices of men, and to men the commands and replies of the gods: he is the mediator who spans the chasm which divides them, and in him all is bound together, and through him the arts of the prophet and the priest, their sacrifices, and mysteries and charms, and all prophecy and incantation, find their way. For God mingles not with man, but through Love all the intercourse and speech of God with man, whether awake or asleep is carried on. The wisdom which understands this is spiritual; all other wisdom, such as that of arts and handicrafts, is mean and vulgar.'''\*

Diotima continues:—

''What if man had eyes to see the true beauty—the divine beauty, I mean, pure and clear and unalloyed, not clogged with the pollutions of mortality, and all the colours and varieties of human life—thither looking, and holding converse with the true beauty divine and simple? Do you not see that in that communion only, beholding beauty with the eye of the mind, he will be enabled to bring forth, not images of beauty, but realities (for he has hold not of an image but of a reality), and bringing forth and nourishing true virtue to become the friend of God and be immortal, if mortal man may. Would that be an ignoble life?'

''Such, Phaedruss—and I speak not only to you, but to all of you—were the words of Diotima; and I am

\* *The Dialogues of Plato*. Translated by Dr. Jowett, vol. ii. *The Symposium*, §§ 202, 203.



persuaded of their truth. And being persuaded of them, I try to persuade others, that in the attainment of this end human nature will not easily find a better helper than love. And, therefore, also I say that every man ought to honour him as I myself honour him, and walk in his ways, and exhort others to do the same, and praise the power and spirit of love according to the measure of my ability now and ever.' " \*

In a rather cold passage of his Introduction to *The Symposium*, Dr. Jowett remarks: "To most men reason and passion appear to be antagonistic both in idea and fact . . . there is a probability that there may be some few—perhaps one or two in a whole generation—in whom the light of truth may not lack the warmth of desire. And if there be such natures, no one will be disposed to deny that 'from them flow most of the benefits of individuals and states'; and even from imperfect combinations of the two elements in teachers or statesmen, great good may often arise." †

And yet, was there no subtle meaning in Socrates' words: "Such, Phaedrus—and I speak not only to you, but to all of you;" and again in his other plea, "I say that every man ought to honour him"? He, at any rate, had his eyes fixed on more than "a few."

The witness of the Greek Anthology is similar to that of Socrates: "Within my heart," writes Meleager, "Love himself has moulded Heliodora with her lovely voice, the soul of my soul." ‡

Marianus writes:

"Where is that backward-bent bow of thine, and the reeds that leap from thy hand and stick fast in mid-heart?"

\* *Symposium*, §§ 211, 212.

† Vol. ii. p. 19.

‡ *Select Epigrams from the Greek Anthology*. J. W. Mackail, I. lxxv.

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where are thy wings? where thy grievous torch? and why carriest thou three crowns in thy hands, and wearest another on thy head?—I spring not from the common Cyprian, O stranger, I am not from earth, the offspring of sensual joy; but I light the torch of learning in pure human minds, and lead the soul upwards into heaven. And I twine crowns of the four virtues; whereof carrying these, one from each, I crown myself with the first, the crown of Wisdom.” \*

Marianus living in Byzantium (491–518) was, of course, writing after the birth of Christianity. But *ἔπος* not *Ἀγάπη* is his term, and thus, and from a standpoint not identical with Meleager's, his power who *lights the torch of human learning* sorts with Plato's which can “penetrate the inmost secret of philosophy.”

Some scholars have insisted, perhaps over-insisted, on the fact that owing to the final corruption of the once glorious, beautiful and great conception of Love, Christian writers were compelled to find some other term, *Ἀγάπη* in Greek, in Latin *caritas* or *dilectio*. But the special point to be made here is not the comparison of the “common Cyprian” with some purer Power, but that the Greek Anthology agrees with the doctrine of the Symposium that the acquisition of knowledge sometimes lies along the Way of Love.

The spread of that which is vaguely called *Science*, the reference being to the Physical Sciences, has produced an impression among some people that any subject of human thought which does not admit of reduction to a proof as rigorous as those which obtain in the “exact sciences,” is, at the best, a matter of dubiety, at the worst, of superstition.

\* *Select Epigrams from the Greek Anthology.* J. W. Mackail, I. 12, xlii.

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It is, indeed, sometimes, very curious, though also very disappointing, to see how students who have been trained in the methods of Natural Science act on this vague assumption when they are called on to deal with matters philosophical, historical, or literary. The presumption would be that they, so trained in careful observation, would be the most accurate manipulators of evidence who could be found. It is unfortunately true that many of them prove nothing of the kind. Rather, it seems, because the subject-matter of the human sciences is elusive and infinitely varying, because therefore the precise formulæ of the exact sciences are wholly inapplicable, those accustomed to these appear to fancy that they may dispense with all principles of evidence, with all rules of reasoning: and because they cannot prove, *e.g.* that any two poems equal any other two, they seem to imagine that all and any discussion about and comparison of them is as futile and fortuitous as the pastime of throwing pebbles at random into a summer sea.

But this rough and ready disposal of those aspects of human life, which are not tangible, palpable nor materially ponderable, this slight put on certain elements in human character, and on causes of human action, upon complex motive, wistful aspiration, kindling zeal, or heroic self-abnegation, all this crude denial is really highly unscientific. No one doubts that the analysis of human motive is extremely difficult, that the appraisement of various ends is a puzzling, baffling task. But difficulty is not a cogent excuse for shirking or burking the point.

Because love is not measurable by a foot rule, it is not therefore proved non-existent or unimportant. Because no one can weigh in a pair of scales this man's fraud against that man's we are not to argue that they must be punished identically or let to go scot free.

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Because we cannot estimate precisely this instance of self-sacrifice compared with that, we do not deny their value or reality. Because Economics and Political Science are, and so far as we can see, must continue to be inexact, there is no ensuing reason why we should blunder along in the industrial or political world as if we neither knew, nor could by any effort find out, anything at all about the problems of commerce or government. Because Child nature is protean and elusive, and teachers are far from infallible, we are not consequently precluded from any and every attempt to proceed by cause and effect, or to base an elastic practice on corrigible principles: "Although our mental states are of an evanescent character, and enjoy but a transitory existence, it must nevertheless be insisted on that they are facts as real as any in the universe. A sensation, an intellectual judgment, or a volition possesses as much reality as a nervous current, a chemical solution, or a transit of Venus." \*

The problems of the "Moral Sciences" are as real and at least as important as those of the Material Sciences, but they do not lend themselves to precise measurement, nor always to exact demonstration. The pull of two passions is as real as that of two engines, stoked to the full, joined by a chain and started in opposite directions: it is the ensuing catastrophe which is not so precisely measurable in the first case as in the second, often too it is less obvious.

"To set the cause above renown,  
To love the game beyond the prize,"

will seem, to many, the more excellent way in life: but they would be hard set to prove it. To others possibly such maxims appear the sheerest folly, and they, too,

\* *Psychology*, by The Rev. Michael Maher, S.J., D.Litt. p. 12.

could hardly "demonstrate" their point. 'And yet in any given case, one or the other must be right then and there. Truth enters into all the problems of Life; one man grasps it and the other misses it.

When we push the spirit of those lines to their last extremity, to the final sacrifice :—

*" Qui procul hinc, the legend's writ—  
The frontier-grave is far away,  
Qui ante diem periit  
Sed miles, sed pro patria,"*

though the truth be drowned in tears, it is not less truth. Indeed it is all the more certain, for it is "the reason of the heart of which the Reason knows naught," and the senses less than nothing.

For these factors in human life, we are not dependent on "sense": sense is *not* the starting-point of all that range of knowledge. Even Locke, the Rationalist, found himself landed at last in the Mystic's seat, in that passage in the Fourth Book, already quoted, where he rules out "the use of the discursive faculty," and speculates upon the knowledge possessed already by angels, and "the spirits of just men made perfect." \* But he did not arrive there soon enough nor sit in it often enough for any considerable part of his surmise to escape into and really colour his philosophy.

It is worth while to inquire briefly concerning the extent of the belief that Love is an instrument, sometimes *the* instrument of human knowledge. It seems to have been a fact as obvious to the Jew as to the Greek: "Take off thy shoes from off thy feet for the place where thou standest is holy ground."

In the wilderness presented to his senses, to his sight, and, in the parched and arid ground, not less to his sense of

\* p. 88.

touch, there penetrated to Moses that knowledge which is beyond sense. As his senses assured him of the barren reality of that wilderness, so did they of the existence of the ground, of his feet upon it, of the shoes which covered his feet. Yet there was something else of which he was at least equally sure, a conviction which nevertheless was no outcome of "sense," "for the place whereon thou standest is *holy* ground." If any one will scoff, if there be in all the world a soul so deprived that there has been no spot ever where he too knew, if only for a fugitive instant, that the place was "holy," grief would meet his case better than laughter.

Job has been so often quoted that he may yield place here to the Son of Sirach :

"The word of God most high is the fountain of wisdom ; and her ways are everlasting commandments.

"There is one wise and greatly to be feared, the Lord sitting upon His throne. He created her.

"She is with all flesh according to His gift, and He hath given her to them that love Him." \*

"I came out of the mouth of the most High, and covered the earth as a cloud.

"I am the mother of fair love, and fear and knowledge and holy hope. I therefore being eternal am given to all my children which are chosen of Him." †

With the coming of Christianity, the theory of mystical knowledge grew in definiteness :

"If any man willeth to do the will of God, he shall know ;" ‡ and that promise St. Anselm had realised when

\* *Ecclus.*, i. 5, 8, 9, 10.

† *Ibid.* xxiv. 3, 18.

‡ St. John vii. 17.

he said, "Having begun by believing I have grown into understanding."

It was not the Apostle of Love, but St. Paul the scholar who wrote: "Having the eye of your heart enlightened; \* and, elsewhere, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." †

Of the Early Fathers, St. Chrysostom may be quoted as insisting on this mystical way of knowledge: "A mystery is that which is everywhere proclaimed, but which is not understood by those who have not right judgment. It is revealed not by cleverness, but by the Holy Ghost, as we are able to receive it." ‡

Perhaps this extra-sense way of knowledge may seem chillier, more alarming to the Rationalist than his does to the Mystic. Mæterlinck apprehended that this might be so, and in his Introduction to *L'Ornement des Noces Spirituelles* of Ruysbroeck, he wrote of such baffled thinkers with picturesque vividness: "Ils croiront entrer dans le vide; ils auront la sensation d'une chute uniforme dans un abîme sans fond, entre des rochers noirs et lisses."

Nevertheless, in spite of Rationalist misgivings the consciousness of Love, of feeling as one way of reaching Truth, gathers force as the Christian Centuries roll on.

"Amor vult esse liber et ab omni mundana affectione alienus, ne internus eius impediatur aspectus," § wrote

\* *Heart not understanding* (as in the English Version) is found in the four earlier codices still extant, the Codices Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus, Vaticanus and Bezae. These are followed by the Vulgate (Eph. i. 18), *illuminatos oculos cordis vestri*, and in the Revised English Version. Symonds (*Hist. of the Italian Renaissance*, vol. iv. p. 54) notes that Dante in his Canzone, *Donne ch'avete intelletto d'amore*, "tells us that *understanding* was the ancient name of *love*, and describes the effect of passion in a young man's heart as a revelation raising him above the level of common experience."

† Romans x. 10.

‡ S. Chrysostom on 1 Corinthians, Homilies vii. 2.

§ *De Imitatione Christi*, Lib. III. Cap. v.

Thomas à Kempis. Lest any one should pour scorn on Love as a weak and debile thing, let him remember the immortal description of it :

" Amor vigilat et dormiens non dormitat. Fatigatus non lassatur, arctatus non coarctatur, territus non conturbatur ; sed sicut vivax flamma et ardens facula sursum erumpit secureque pertransit. . . .

" Est amor velox, sincerus, pius, iucundus et amoenus ; fortis, patiens, fidelis, prudens, longanimis, virilis et se ipsum numquam quaerens." \*

If we turn from the Dutch to an English Mystic we find as fervent conviction : " Love is a virtue which is the rightest affection of man's soul. Truth may be without Love ; but it cannot help without it. Love is a perfection of learning." †

Then also to Mother Julian of Norwich, Love was the ground, the explanation and the purpose of life : "*What ? wouldest thou wit thy Lord's meaning in this thing ? Wit it well : love was his meaning. Who sheweth it thee ? Love. Wherefore sheweth he it thee ? For love. Hold thee therein, thou shalt wit more in the same. But thou shalt never wit therein other without end.*" ‡ Commenting upon this passage, Fr. George Tyrrell wrote in his Introduction : " Beneath the life of those senses which reveal to us that world of appearances, which the unreflecting so easily confound with the reality which it only symbolises ; beneath the life of the understanding, whose forms and frames (contrasting in their permanence and universality with the unsteadiness and uncertainty of that chaos of fleeting phenomena which they but classify and set in order) have seemed to some to merit the name of Reality ; beneath

\* *De Imitatione Christi*, Lib. III. Cap. v.

† *The Form of Perfect Living*, ch. x. Richard Rolle of Hampole.

‡ *Revelations of Divine Love*. Mother Juliana of Norwich, ch. lxxxv.



even the life of the higher, though self-centred and self-regarding emotions and sentiments, æsthetic or spiritual ; deep down at the very basis of the soul, is to be sought the only life that in an absolute and independent sense deserves the name of ' real,' because by it alone are we brought into conscious relation, with other personalities, and made aware of our own. . . . Loveless, self-centred, torn altogether from its connection with the whole, the soul may still live the surface-life of sense or thought or reason, but its grasp on reality is relaxed, as it were, in spiritual death."

Again, there is St. John of the Cross who elucidates, so far as human language can, this enlightenment by means of Love ; but the whole passage in *The Dark Night of the Soul*\* is too long for quotation here. No one can have forgotten Pascal, who, with the French gift for hurling truth upon the world in an unforgettable epigram, declared, "Le cœur a ses raisons que la Raison ne connaît pas ;" † nor Vauvenargues' rendering of the same truth, "les grandes pensées viennent du cœur ;" nor that other passage, where he echoes Pascal in the daring maxim, "La raison ne connaît pas les intérêts du cœur." ‡

Perhaps this is the most suitable place to quote a much later French writer, who, untouched by the rationalism surrounding him, declared : " L'âme est aux yeux ce que la vue est au toucher : elle saisit ce que échappe à tous les sens. Comme dans l'art, ce qu'il y a de plus beau est hors des règles, de même dans la connaissance ce qu'il y a de plus haut et de plus vrai est hors de l'expérience." §

Then there was a French contemporary of Locke, who died in Paris just two years before the publication of the *Thoughts concerning Education*, that lay-brother of the

\* Bk. ii. ch. x. † *Pensées*. Blaise Pascal, Cul. XVII. v.

‡ *Reflexions et Maximes*, 127, 124.

§ *Pensées*. Joubert, III. xvii.

Discalced Carmelites who wrote: "There is no one but must avow that God is beyond our understanding. To be united to Him therefore it is necessary to deny to the will all tastes and pleasures, bodily and spiritual, that being thus detached, it can be free to love God above all things. For if the will can in any measure come to know God, it can do so only through Love."\* Finally not to weary by seeming to pile Pelion upon Ossa, there was a writer in England a contemporary of Locke's earlier years, a man who in a work which has been exhumed recently, wrote these remarkable words: "Love is the true means by which the world is enjoyed; our love to others, and others' love to us. We ought therefore above all things to get acquainted with the nature of Love. For Love is the root and foundation of Nature. Love is the Soul of Life and Crown of Rewards. If we cannot be satisfied in the nature of Love we can never be satisfied at all. The very end for which God made the world, was that He might manifest His Love. Unless, therefore, we can be satisfied with His Love so manifested, we can never be satisfied. There are many glorious excellences in the material World. but without Love they are all abortive. We might spend ages in contemplating the nature of the Sun, and entertain ourselves many years with the beauty of the stars, and services of the sea; but the Soul of Man is above all these, it comprehendeth all ages in a moment; and unless it perceive something more excellent, is very desolate."†

And again he writes: "You are as prone to love as the sun is to shine; it being the most delightful and natural employment of the Soul of Man; without which you are dark and miserable. Consider, therefore, the extent of Love, its vigour and excellency. For certainly, he that

\* *Spiritual Maxims of Brother Lawrence.*

† *Centuries of Meditation.* Thomas Traherne, ii. 62.

delights not in Love, makes vain the Universe, and is of necessity to himself the greatest burden. The whole world ministers to you as the Theatre of your Love. It sustains you and all objects that you may continue to love them. Without which it were better for you to have no being. Life without objects is sensible emptiness, and that is a greater misery than Death or Nothing. Objects without Love are a delusion of life." \*

And so, alike in Greece of the far-off days and in the modern world, the fundamental facts of life do not alter. Reason is a beautiful thing, a magnificent instrument, but it is not, as the thorough-going Rationalist would fain persuade us, man's all ; love is still—

" The ladder of the vision  
Whereon go  
To and fro  
In ascension and demission  
Star-flecked feet of Paradise."

It should be quite unnecessary to point out that " certain of (our) own poets " have held that Feeling and Love, far from being distrusted by the intellect, far from being spurned, tabooed or rejected as educational means, are really and truly avenues of knowledge. This is, for example, inwoven into the very texture of Wordsworth's *Prelude* ; it is the theme of those lines of Browning—

". . . to KNOW  
Rather consists in opening out a way  
Whence the imprisoned splendour may escape  
Than in effecting entry for a light  
Supposed to be without."

Pope's Innocent's confession in *The Ring and the Book* harps on the same string—

" Beyond the tale I reach into the dark,  
Feel what I cannot see."

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\* *Centuries of Meditation*. Thomas Traherne, ii. 62.

No doubt the old *argumentum ad hominem*—the poets and mystics are mad fellows after all—may be tried as a weapon against the theory. Yet, a point of view which has lasted at least from the days of Plato to our own ; which has counted among its adherents, Jew and Greek, Teuton, and Latin, educated and uneducated, man and woman cannot be despised lightly by the psychologist. If any one be so unwise as to inquire, "Who heeds your Son of Sirach, or your Thomas à Kempis, your St. John of the Cross or your Thomas Traherne ? " he can scarcely complain if the retort be flung back, "Who heeds your Locke or your Edgeworth ? " After all, the sensible answer from the psychologist's point of view is this : all *genuine* experience is material for the psychologist, who, as a scientific person, is bound to have no preconceived prejudice, no preconceived scorn, but should give his careful and honest consideration to every *bonâ fide* bit of evidence.

The Sense-Rationalists have not, lately, been met on their own ground. If they will appeal to experience, to experience we will go ; but not to experience carefully selected from one or a few groups. Until the contrary be proved indefeasibly, there is no ground for declaring that those who believe in spiritual supernatural forces are less sane, less gifted, less able than the Rationalists. They are, undoubtedly, a numerous multitude ; and it seems to some of us not improbable that they constitute the main light, hope, and glory of the world. It is not they who ever suggest by their drab appearance and their unilluminated faces some empty shell whose occupant left it long since. Not so long ago, a young English priest won from the African Natives amongst whom he laid down his life the title of "The teacher with the light in his face." Not "dry light," one would surmise.

Slowly, it is coming to be recognised that Psychology

cannot pick and choose; if it intend to analyse human nature, it must take men and women in the mass with all their "infinite variety." Fr. Michael Maher has pointed out, with careful accuracy, that there are two methods of psychological research; the first "subjective," *i.e.* when the mind turns inwards, and investigates its own phenomena; the second "objective"; but of this he declares that "evidence gained in this way is of an essentially secondary or supplementary value, its chief use being that of suggestion or corroboration." That secondary value is not *small*. The importance of suggestion and corroboration in obscure regions such as that of the working of the human mind can hardly be overrated; and it may be suggested further that an *accumulation* of instances may afford material for that "Method of Difference," whose extreme value in argument and experiment J. S. Mill demonstrated. Among the forms of "objective investigation" Fr. Maher reckons "the products of the human mind as embodied in language," *i.e.* just precisely the kind of evidence I have been adducing in this chapter, and which I have claimed is worthy of inclusion among the whole evidence.\*

This is no new plea I am making; every psychologist admits that human experience is the ground of psychology; *e.g.* Professor Darroch has written quite recently: "In the former" (*i.e.* in Psychology) "the only real test is by reference to individual experience, and here we must trust the good faith of the observer." † Professor James wrote: "To the Psychologist the religious propensities of man must be at least as interesting as any other of the facts pertaining to his mental constitution;" ‡ one might add that

\* *Psychology*. Fr. Michael Maher, S.J., D.Litt., pp. 11-18, where a full list of these forms of "objective investigation" is given.

† *The Place of Psychology in the Training of the Teacher*, by A. Darroch, p. 13.

‡ *Varieties of Religious Experience*, by W. James, p. 2.

such interest, to be fertile, should not be of the museum variety. In fact, we need to study all the varieties which are genuine experiences. But the English are a shy race when it comes to the things which matter.

After all, where does Locke himself shine most brightly? Surely in that "character" which Le Clerc handed down to us, wherein the rationalist is lost in the kindly human being so capable of playing his part with courteous dignity and sympathetic regard in whatever company he found himself; and again, in those letters to Molyneux, which stiffened though they may be with the buckram spirit of the eighteenth century, yet let free here and there the true deep affection always struggling to escape. It is all the more disappointing then that he should have adhered so rigorously to pure sensationalist-rationalism as the foundation of education. For, to be quite practical, we can see how his eschewing of feeling acted in fact, when we remember his injunctions about not yielding to the desires of children, which extracted remonstrances even from the admiring Molyneux. Indeed, the passage in the *Thoughts concerning Education* \* strikes such a cold chill, that it is not amazing that within three days of receiving the book Molyneux wrote:—

"I think you propose nothing in your whole book but what is very reasonable and very practicable, except only in one particular which seems to bear hard on the tender spirits of children, and the natural affections of parents; in pp. 117, 118, where you advise 'that a child should never be suffered to have what he craves, or so much as speaks for, much less if he cries for it.' † I acknowledge what you say, in explaining this rule, sect. 101, in relation to natural wants, especially that of hunger, may be well enough

\* Sect. 107.

† The passage which this represents occurs in § 106 of the book, as Locke re-wrote it finally.

allowed ; but in sect. 102, where you come to apply it to 'wants of fancy and affectation,' you seem too strict and severe. You say indeed 'this will teach them to stifle their desires, and to practice modesty and temperance'; but for teaching these virtues, I conceive we shall have occasion enough in relation to their hurtful desires, without abridging them so wholly, in matters indifferent and innocent, that tend only to divert and please their busy spirits. You allow indeed that 'twould be inhumanity to deny them those things one perceives would delight them;' if so, I see no reason why, in a modest way, and with submission to the wills of their superiors, they may not be allowed to declare what will delight them. No, say you, 'but in all wants of fancy and affectation they should never, if once declared, be hearkened to or complied with.' This I can never agree to ; it being to deny that liberty between a child and its parents, as we desire, and have granted us, between man and his Creator. And, as in his case, man is allowed to declare his wants, and with submission to recommend his requests to God, so I think children may be allowed by their parents or governors. And as between the creature and the Creator all manner of repining upon denial or disappointment is forbidden : so, in the case of children, all frowardness or discontent, upon a refusal, is severely to be reprimanded. But thus far I agree with you, in the whole, that whether it be in wants natural or fanciful, that they express their desires in a froward, humoursome manner, there they should be surely denied them. A farther reason for my allowing children a liberty of expressing their innocent desires, is that the contrary is impracticable ; and you must have the children almost moaped for the want of diversion and recreation, or else you must have those about them study nothing all day long, but how to find employment for them ; and how this would rack the

invention of any man alive, I leave you to judge. And besides, were it an easy task for any adult person to study the fancy, the unaccountable fancy and diversion of children the whole year round; yet it would not prove delightful to a child not being his own choice. But this, you'll say is what you would have imprinted on them, that they are not to choose for themselves; but why not, in harmless things, and plays or sports, I see no reason. In all things of moment, let them live by the conduct of others wiser than themselves." \*

Locke, in his reply, saved the situation by including recreation and diversion among "natural wants," among those therefore which children may express. "But being allowed that, as one of their natural wants, they should not yet be permitted to let loose their natural desires in importunities for what they fancy. Children are very apt to covet what they see those, above them in age, have or do, to have or do the like, especially if it be in their elder brothers and sisters. Does one go abroad? The other strait has a mind to it too. Has such an one new, or fine clothes, or playthings? They, if you once allow it them, will be impatient for the like, and think themselves ill dealt with if they have it not." † He expresses confidence that if Molyneux will read the book again, all these sections will now be seen in the right light, *i.e.* in that which he originally intended.

Some readers may think that Locke's explanations really explain away his original position. To be still more subtly practical, we may pursue this incident a little further, and see what remoter consequences were wrought by the neglect of the right use of love. Surely Molyneux must have seen that Locke had, in fact, shifted his position;

\* Letter from Molyneux to Locke, Dublin, August 12, 1693.

† Locke to Molyneux, Oates, August 23, 1693.



surely he accepted the rather flimsy explanations out of blind partiality? Had he followed his own parental instinct, which about the affections was surely sounder than Locke's untried theory, he would have realised that strenuous affection properly aware of its duties to a friend would have driven the argument home faithfully, and would have insisted—for sheer affection's sake, if for nothing else—on having those misleading sections reconsidered. Rationalism in the embrace of partiality is indeed a sad sight.

Nevertheless, in private intercourse, and occasionally as *e.g.* in the Fourth Book of the *Essay*, Locke sloughed off his rationalism, and the other self of him, "the feeling . . . acting man," gained the upper hand for an evanescent hour. He was there, that other man, though choked off and brushed aside too often by the ordinary occupant.

It may be urged that all the quotations from various thinkers which I adduced above are not *experience*; and that psychology rests on experience. But, as Fr. Maher urged, they are *experience written down*. What men and women write in good faith, and a substratum of what they write deliberately as fiction, is, after all, the record of what they have thought, seen, felt, willed, in a word of what they have experienced. The entire problem of psychology rests at last on a plain fact, what *has been experienced*. Psychology has nothing to do finally with what we hope or wish might be the facts, but with the facts we have experienced.

To the query—is love a way of knowledge?—any one who has ever loved anybody or anything will give an unhesitating "yes." We understand, how often we say so, those whom we love, let them appear strange as they may to people outside. We learn far more rapidly when we love; we see, we grasp the point at once; obstacles melt

before ardour. Love is intuitive, seeing at a glance, leaping forward without the aid of Locke's "discursive faculty." As Fr. Tyrrell once wrote: "All love is mystical in that it refuses the exact analysis of reason, which without contradicting, it ineffably transcends." \* How precisely he hits the mark—"which without contradicting, it ineffably transcends."

It is not an alternative way of knowing. Men are not invited to know by reason *or* love. Why, in the name of human experience, should they not use both? Man runs no danger of knowing too much even if he avail himself of every lawful means. This fact, the reality of extra-sense knowledge, is of prime importance to educators here and now. The whole question of rationalism is still alive. The issue of the philosophy of Locke, of the unilluminated common-sense of the Edgeworths, and of the Utilitarianism of Mill, so much less desiccating though it was in him than in his disciples, may be found in the fact, whether people hail it with satisfaction or no, that ours is a Materialistic Age. It can be seen in the mediocre achievements of all kinds of people in every walk of life. Who, nowadays, like an old Cathedral Builder, cares to carve a beetle on the back of a leaf, inaccessible to sight, only to be found by the hand of an alert seeker? † It is shown as palpably in the wild struggle for wealth which, being attained, apparently puzzles its owners, who seem hardly to know what to do with it. It can be seen in cheap art, and perhaps cheaper literature; and the same dreary influence is traceable in philosophy and education. Truth must "work," obviously and immediately; education must pay tangibly and on the nail.

\* *Faith of the Millions*. Fr. George Tyrrell, S.J., vol. i. p. 283.

† Unless my memory plays me a trick—on a pillar on the north side of the Choir of Carlisle Cathedral.

And so, Man, who with Pascal "n'est produit que pour l'infinité," is invited, in these modern times, to tie himself down to the beautiful but unsatisfying earth, and even thereupon is to allow himself no instrument of appreciation but his "Five Senses;" the Sense-Rationalists having given a new and terrible meaning to the ancient words, "*Cælum cæli DOMINO: terram autem dedit filiis hominum.*"\*

Let us, for once, venture to speak out, to meet Materialism boldly. What is it which makes the aridity of so many of our co-temporaries; which leads them to stare politely if any one should be supposed still "to believe in those old tales;" which leaves them, Art-critics, Archæologists, Students of Architecture or what not, ever with some lack—hard to describe, but easy to feel—before the supreme pictures, in the greatest Cathedrals; leaves them with all their knowledge and refinement that very last thing they would desire to be, *banales*, teachers *without* the light in their faces—what is it? Surely it is that they have persuaded themselves of or sadly consented to the essential reality of materialism; that for them, there is nothing behind, no beyond. The Chigi Madonna is this, that or the other of line, colour, arrangement, but the inner, the non-material, the *real* side, as real to-day as when Botticelli painted it, as real to-day as on that day of which he dreamed while he painted, when, in the first unimaginable moment, the truth dawned, and the sword pierced her own Heart, all that, the *soul* not the *sense* of the thing is dead for them; in so far as a beautiful fable, a delightful story of something "of course quite untrue," the figment of a sensitive imagination is, surely, dead, what else can you call it? For, after all, the truth is the life of a tradition or story. Why do the tales of Greece haunt men's minds still, or the dreams of the East colour the colder Western imagination? Not

\* Ps. cxiii. 16.

because they were pure inventions ; but because, in those far times, men were feeling after GOD, if haply they might find Him, and did not wholly fail in their High Quest.

It is not only thus with the great pictures of the world ; the noble buildings are viewed by many in the same sterilised fashion. Chartres Cathedral is, doubtless, for all who behold it, marvellous in its perfection of form, colour of blazing burning glass, and sombre majesty ; but it again, for many of the present generation, is reduced to this, that or the other of splendid architecture, or unsurpassed windows. For those to whom it is not at once a triumphant work of Faith and Art, it surely cannot be truly alive ? To an individual who once stood on the very steps of the High Altar, with her back thereto and her arms akimbo, apparently appraising the value of the roof, or estimating perhaps the feasibility of transporting it across the Atlantic, it must, one fancies, have been very dead indeed. Yet about it everywhere lingers the live reality, inextinguishable, imperishable, of the devotion and aspiration of countless men and women, kings and queens, prelates, priests, statesmen, courtiers, soldiers, artisans, peasants, through sequent centuries ; everywhere within it Life quickens in the early moments of dawn, when, as half-hour succeeds half-hour, worship never ceases amid the shaded mysteries of that most stupendous place, the Chapel of Notre-Dame de Sous Terre ; and still, when the voices have ceased and the hours of the working day pass on, all is alive, the Faithful, men, women and glad little children come and go ; till when evening falls, and at last the Portail Royal is closed, the spires rise dim and vast to heaven, and the weird cries of the owls nesting in the tower of Jean de Beauce alone break the stirless peace, the great Cathedral broods, even like a live soul, over the silent *Place*, drawing from a French peasant woman the

breathless comment, "Ça a vraiment quelque chose de surnaturelle à cette heure, n'est ce-pas ?"

All this which, let us confess it frankly, is not known by the unaided senses, all this the modern educators, those who hold the seat of honour in pedagogical places, who plan schemes and dictate syllabuses, invite us to relinquish for empiricism.

I am not pretending that Locke was the first empiricist in English Education. There was, *e.g.* many generations before his time, Sir Thomas Elyot who wrote: "Let it be also considered that we be men and not angels, wherefore we know nothing but by outward signification." \* When we reflect that this sentence is a commentary on his plea that a king is crowned with pomp and publicity in order that beholders should be impressed and should pay him lasting homage, we must realise that Elyot also is among the empiricists. It is not then that empiricism was introduced to England by Locke. The important point is that it has gathered and apparently is still gathering force as the centuries go on. The chill empiricism of Locke, the soulless utilitarianism of the Edgeworths, the rationalism of Mill which, warmed and coloured so far as he was concerned in later life, remained cold and unimaginative in his disciples, who seemed so unaware of another element in him, has, in the region of Education, given place to the "sensationalism" which Herbart introduced, and which a great school of pedagogues is popularising. Readers of Herbart will remember his desolating account of the Soul. Translated by Professor Adams, it runs as follows:—

"The soul has no capacity, no faculty whatever either to receive or to produce anything.

"It is therefore no *tabula rasa* in the sense that impressions foreign to its nature may be made on it; also it is no

\* *Boke of the Governour*, ch. ii.

substance in Leibnitz' sense, which includes original self-activity. It has originally neither ideas, nor feelings, nor desires; it knows nothing of itself and nothing of other things; further, within it lie no forms of intuition and thought, no laws of willing and acting, nor any sort of pre-disposition, however remote to all these." \*

Through several pages in the most light-hearted fashion Professor Adams plays with this Herbartian Soul. It would be very excellent fooling about some quite unimportant entity; but when we realise that we are asked to drag down to this level all which made the distinction, good or bad, of such men and women say as St. Bernard, St. Thomas Aquinas, Alfred the Great, Charlemagne, Dante, Lionardo da Vinci, Cesare Borgia, Savonarola, Benvenuto Cellini, Ignatius Loyola, Queen Elizabeth, Shakspeare, Pope Pius II., Cromwell, Falkland, Fénelon, St. Catherine of Genoa, Lancelot Andrewes, Napoleon, or Marie Antoinette, to take a random selection of people as unlike one another as they could possibly be, except in distinction of personality, of Ego—which is apparently what Herbart meant by soul—then the appositeness of jesting about the matter seems less palpable.

Some of Herbart's disciples modify, some, if it be possible, intensify his views, as they seek to impress them on young teachers, and hence eventually to propagate them broadcast through the land.

Professor de Garmo, *e.g.* slightly modifies the disastrous state of affairs when he writes: "All mental activity is based upon the results of sense perception, with which it starts. It is inconceivable that a being having no use of the senses could have any mental life. It is true indeed that mental life presupposes *more* than a mere use of the

\* *Lehrbuch zur Psychologie*, Pf. III. §§ 152, 153. Translated in *Herbartian Psychology*, p. 47.

senses, but it presupposes this also." \* No doubt, he admits an element which Herbart might have denied: but even so, he expressly states that knowledge not dependent on the senses cannot exist.

It has occasionally been the recreation of literary persons to write Imaginary Dialogues between great people, represented as encountering each other in a future state. One may perhaps be forgiven for wishing that circumstances could have permitted Vauvenargues, so admirably apt in this particular *genre*, to have related for us the meeting of Professor de Garmo and St. John of the Cross. The American teacher is not alone. Mr. and Mrs. Felkin, the introducers to the British Public of Herbart, by the simple media of translation and exposition, write as follows: "Herbart conceived of the soul as a simple, unchanging thing, originally without any plurality of states, activities, or powers: on its union with the body it becomes the bearer of the presentations, which, as hereafter explained, mutually conflict with and suppress or fuse with each other in consciousness. Herbart believed the psychical activity of this distinct spiritual substance to be like the physical energy of the material world, indestructible. On this ground he held the soul to be immortal. . . . The meaning attached by Herbart to 'soul' precludes the substitution of any other term for it here. But the student is reminded that, as the basis of his psychology, it includes as its modes of manifestation, like the word *mind* before referred to when used by psychologists, knowing, feeling, willing. It is permissible to use the terms *mind* and *soul* as interchangeable, so long as the classification of their manifestations is under consideration." †

\* *Essentials of Method*. Charles de Garmo, § 1.

† *Introduction to Herbart's Education*. Henry M. and Emmie Felkin, pp. 13, 14.

And they, I think, may be said to present Herbart without modification. How a "bearer of presentations," the arena whereupon "they conflict with or suppress or fuse with each other," can be said to feel or will, is a matter beyond the imagination of the present writer. If any one will argue that the *ipse dixit* of a German Professor, some time ago deceased, has little practical import for the English life of to-day, let him recollect, even as he pays full tribute to our natural and age-long insularity, that these books are set occasionally as "special subjects" for intending teachers: and let him reflect on the far-reaching, if not easily calculable influence of teachers, primary and secondary. It is very important therefore to know whether Herbart be right or wrong. Neither Elyot, Locke, nor De Garmo goes quite so far as Herbart went: nevertheless, with them all the human understanding is at best but a rake which can garden among the perceptions of sense as much as it likes, but further than that is precluded irrevocably from acting.

There is, as I have already said, nothing new in this empiricist view. Its noxiousness at the present moment depends on two facts; first on its aptness to the spirit of the age; secondly, on the fact that philosophy has descended from heaven, where, as Montaigne observed, she was losing her time, and penetrates in a dilute and therefore misleading form to all, or to the majority of those who are preparing for the teaching profession; penetrates, therefore, in the long run, to the minds of the children of our race. But in the name of common courage and common-sense, let us remember that there was once a man called Plato, and that empiricism is not the creed of all mankind. It is in general, no doubt, a futile task, when attacking a position, to plead that the greatest have never held it; for, after all, who shall settle who have been, who



are, the greatest? But when it is a matter of psychology, and this is, it is not quite so futile to urge the experience of men and women, whether great or little, the experience of the commonplace, of the unusual, of all and sundry, for here everything counts for something. Psychology is bound to take account of all human opinion and experience; it cannot, without stultifying itself, indulge in the heretics' pet practice, picking and choosing. If the result of consulting all who have given heed to this matter be that there are opposing volumes of opinion, well, even so, if nothing more consoling than suspension of judgment prove to be our lot, at any rate empiricism of this arrogant, dogmatic, unyielding kind cannot claim the victory.

So it becomes a little more than worth while to a generation given over to the worship of that which its eyes can see, its hands handle, its palate taste, to plead for the reality of those extra-sense happenings which to some of us are more "real" than any material thing can be. For that reason it has been worth while to garner a few examples of that which can be said by the believers in extra-sense knowledge, so much greater as the whole volume of it is than many perhaps in this generation care to admit. But, it may also be well to say, what is indeed obvious enough to every thoughtful person who will look at things as they are, that the main argument is nothing so fatuous as an attack on the reality, on the value of "sense-knowledge;" but a plea for the inclusion in the sum-total of our possessions of "extra-sense" knowledge. Moreover, it is perhaps worth while once more to insist on the variety of human temperament, hence of human experience. How that can be accounted for on the Herbartian theory of the "empty bare soul," one does not see: but that men and women differ and differ exceedingly is a fact palpable to any one who chooses to open his eyes and see what is before them.

Consequently, what we call the same result may be reached by more roads than one. For example, in spite of some shallow and not very edifying sentimentalisms set forth by those who happen to prefer on Sunday a country walk to the Church's Liturgy, about "worshipping God in nature," it is a fact that there are some "pure in heart" who "see GOD" in the delicate sheen of a butterfly's wing, or the adapted perfection of a wild orchis, while others are meeting the Real Presence in the ordained Place and Way. But they are rare, and it seems sometimes as if too many self-indulgent, intellectually-insubordinate persons were presuming to steal their clothes, and venturing themselves into perilous paths. Further still, there have been, doubtless again will be, those who bewildered by the clash of disputation, harassed by doubts, distressed by seemingly unanswerable arguments relentlessly pushed home, have, in the hour of despair, when everything seemed falling around them, and they too almost lamented that "the great Companion is dead," turned to some fair place—on the Forest, over the Moor, among the Hills, by the Sea, turned to some retreat unencumbered for the moment by the presence of humanity, and there and then have found again behind all that phenomenal beauty, behind that irresistible appeal to the senses of contour, colour, sound, and fragrance, and yet so insistent as to be scarcely veiled, the irrefutable certainty of the Real Presence of Power, and, supremely of Love, holding out the Eternal Hands, upholding all things with the Everlasting Arms; for still at that eleventh hour of strife, chaos and doubt, still, "in His temple, everything saith glory."

Doubtless, these facts are so: yet it is, after all, but of a small minority that they are *la vraie vérité*. "There are many paths to the same goal," said Vauvenargues; many, *i.e.* on each of which but few can be found; and this

proposition that there are various ways of compassing one and the same end is the favourite thesis of an age given over to the manufacture of novel gospels. Yet, just because, so limited and childish are the majority of us, "strait is the gate and narrow is the way," it is also a fact of experience that if we refuse this way, tame and dull though it look, and go crusading after broad paths and delightful spaces, we run a desperate risk of closing the day in catastrophic gloom. For remarkable minds, there are, no doubt, remarkable ways; but the difficulty arises when what was spoken in the ear in closets (and was harmless or even beneficial there), is trumpeted from the house-tops to all and sundry of the average herd.

The plea, then, is that sense-knowledge is *not* our all, *pace* Locke and the Edgeworths, *pace* Herbart, de Garmo and those others who set them forth, from whose pages I ventured to quote—at perhaps inordinate length—lest any one should suppose, if I expressed the matter in my own words, that this exaggerated insistence on sense-knowledge might be merely a bogey of my own manufacture.

In addition to those which I have already quoted on the side of extra-sense knowledge, other instances might be adduced if space permitted; *e.g.* from the Bible which being Catholic is the exclusive possession of no one race or time; from the Fathers and the Saints, experts as one might say in the spiritual life. It is quite possible that people who would go naturally to a mathematician for the solution of a mathematical problem, to a biologist for information about some form of life, will yet boggle at the suggestion of referring a religious point to a religious person. It seems as if specialists are allowed possession in any and every region save the fundamental places of human life. Yet, after all, why go to learn about spiritual things from those who maintain their non-existence? since it is

admittedly hard to prove a negative. Let us rather appeal to those who assert the positive, and see how they succeed or fail to carry conviction, see how they put their theory into practice, and, so doing, what they make of life: for any particular affirmative, once established, will suffice for the destruction of your universal negative.

Finally, the consciousness of extra-sense knowledge may be found in "certain of" our "own poets": that natural heritage so widely neglected, for no reason perhaps save that its appropriation by one involves no dispossession of another, since often it seems that what every one can have nobody much wants.

So, once more, the plea here made is for knowledge issuing from the combined action of sense, reason, and intuition, as against the exclusion and rejection of any part of human nature. Sense must, of course, take its part in teaching, specially in the beginning of life. Then; reason has its own high function:—

"Unto the Master-mind  
Mind should be precious."

Lastly, there is intuition, the apprehension of the inner sense; a power hard to analyse, but real, and seen in its effects in the lives of men: that reaching-out, in its highest manifestations, in the most spiritual human beings, of burning Love after the ultimate realities, present too in the humblest human creature, burning dimly not quite extinguished in the hardened, the blunted, the undeveloped; that fragrance of perfection, that aureole round this dusty life of men on earth; the glimmer in one, the full shining in another of the Light which lighteth every man coming into the world. It may perhaps be argued that it is unfair to mingle what people call theology and philosophy. It is therefore right to urge that theology, or as one would

prefer to say, a real belief in the truths of religion, is not one among many competing and equally important "subjects." The philosophical difference between a person of religion and a person of no religion is one of entire standpoint and outlook. The whole philosophy of a man who believes in the real existence of God is and must be, from a scientific, from a philosophic point of view, fundamentally parted from that of one who disbelieves, or who, "leaving it open," proceeds to philosophise in the absence of God. People, in general, seem shy of thinking, much more of saying, this plainly and bluntly. But in the best interests of clear thinking, of science, using the word in a broad sense, it is nothing short of folly to burk the point; it is not unlike discussing elaborately the flowers you are going to raise, while you deny or leave open to doubt, the existence of any ground wherein to plant them. Let us by all means choose our premises, let them be, according to our lights, or predilections or whatever the determining factors be called, theistic or non-theistic; but to argue that it really does not matter which they are, suggests an attempt to qualify for Bedlam.

Let there be no mistake. This plea for extra-sense knowledge is not an attack on the reality or on the value of sense-knowledge. The people who have been most conspicuous for their extra-sense knowledge, *e.g.* St. Francis of Assisi, have certainly not fallen behind other men in their appreciation of the impressions of sense, the beauty of this external world, the shining of light, the wealth of colour, the strength and grace of form, the glory of melody, the joy of fragrance :—

Laudato sii, mio signore, con tutte le tue creature specialmente  
messer lo frate sole,  
lo quale giorno e allumini per lui.

Ed ello è bello e radiante con grande splendore ;  
da te, altissimo ; porta significazione.

Laudato sii, mio signore, per frate vento  
e per aere e nuvolo e sereno e ogni tempo.

Laudato sii, mio signore, per sora nostra madre terra,  
la quale ne sustenta e governa  
E produce diversi frutti, con coloriti fiori ed erba.\*

What is protested against is that theory which strives to maintain that there is no knowledge outside sense : that there is none which does not take its rise in sense. It is against that narrowing, that misleading impoverishment of human nature, and the consequent impoverishment of educational systems, that a determined stand should be made. After all, what interest can any of us have in making out the worst case for ourselves ? If we take all we are, and use all we have, our achievement is not too great : why cut ourselves in half ? Why restrict ourselves to sense, and to reflexion about sense-impressions, and cut off and reject the feelings and the will and reflexion about their problems ? Why, indeed ?

And let us plead further for the recognition of the value of extra-sense knowledge and for the recognition of the extreme importance of assigning its boundaries, and providing its just limits, just because it is peculiarly liable to misuse, and because, being misused, it may lead to catastrophe.

Here, in the interests of the Truth which Locke sought for so devotedly, though occasionally he failed, and failed badly, in his search, in the interests of the Truth which must ever be supremely dear to all honest men and women, whether they be or be not " religiously minded," it seems well after having pleaded, I hope vigorously, against the

\* Il Cantico del Sole, a reading copied from an ancient MS. at Assisi, edited by Adolfo Padovan, published by Ulrico Hoepli, Milan.

exclusion of the will and the feelings from any and every educational scheme, having pleaded that sense, reason, feeling, and will are integral parts of human nature, all alike needing training, all alike capable of contributing some quota to the whole life of the man, it seems well to remember the other aspect of the case. Perhaps as a reaction against sensationalist rationalism, but, whatever its cause, most patent and palpable, there is nowadays a great, seemingly a growing, interest in what people call Mysticism. Many of them, no doubt, know what they mean by the word ; but it is to be feared that not a few do not. Against those who in the name of Mysticism, might succeed, through their own misapprehension of it, in establishing some intolerable *régime* of undisciplined sentimentalism, let us, and especially those of us who believe sincerely in love as an instrument of knowledge, ever be on our most vigilant guard. On the one hand, let us, if we can, wrest some portion of life from mere sense ; on the other, let us beware of uncontrolled, unsifted, unbalanced feeling. It is the old problem which meets man everywhere. How shall he *use* all good gifts, ignoring none, rejecting none, abusing none ? which is, indeed, the core of the final problem of education. How can children, according to their several states, be trained to reach and to maintain that finely poised, that delicately-judged point ? The inclusion of feeling, of Love among the instruments of knowledge, adds to the question a complexity, a hazardous element of difficulty of which Locke and the Edgeworths never dreamed.

There still remains that other great lack in the Educational Theory of the Sensationalist School, and a very remarkable one, viz. the neglect of material Beauty, which, while it is in no way extra-sensational in origin, might yet be called the finer part of sense-knowledge.

One might have supposed that Locke, *e.g.* who held that the senses play so large a part in the business of Education, would have insisted on the cultivation of a taste for all that world of extreme beauty, beauty of line, colour, substance, texture, which belongs to the sphere of human sight. But it is not so: he says, for example: "Clothes, when they need, they must have: but if they *speak* for this stuff or that colour, they should be sure to go without it." \* Does Locke really mean what he implies, that beauty is not a factor in education? If it were, it would surely need training, and he would have mentioned that necessity: but as he rules out the right of choice, he seems to deny the necessity, and, hence, implicitly the importance, of a sense of beauty, seems to overlook the dreadful import of ugliness, of indifference to ugliness. For it is nothing but a want of trained taste which allows some unknown arbiter of fashion to foist on a community most hideous clothes; which encourages wretched poverty of design on china, wall paper, and draperies; which fills people's rooms with "ornaments," whose ugliness is only equalled by their pointlessness. It was to avoid such diurnal dismalness of surroundings that Pater sent to the young Marius in the temple of Æsculapius the "youthful figure" which, to the boy's restless insomnia, seemed "entire relief from distress like blue sky in a storm at sea," the youthful exponent of the value of beauty in human life, who bade the child "to keep ever by him if it were but a single choice flower, a graceful animal or sea shell, as a token and representative of the whole kingdom of such things." †

But rationalism, *si triste et si morne*, is wholly alien, so it seems to the graciousness of beauty, beauty of light as

\* *Thoughts concerning Education*, § 107.

† *Marius the Epicurean*, ch. iii.



the white clouds fleck the blue sky above spring meadows, beauty of line in the contours of natural landscape or in the works of men, beauty of tint in this coloured, warm, fragrant world, beauty of sound as the wind rises and falls among the whispering pines, or as the wine-dark streams tumble, rush or trickle over their stony beds. No systematic use of Beauty, whether of Nature or of Art, enters into the Educational schemes of these sense-rationalists. Children may learn drawing: but just for the sake of acquiring manual skill, or of increasing in themselves the power of accurate observation.

The Edgeworths wrote a grievous chapter called *Female Accomplishments*.<sup>\*</sup> But they nowhere in it consider how powerful and formative a factor in educational training the sense of Beauty might be. It is true that they object to accomplishments as mere decoration for matrimony; further, that accomplishments might be resources against that *ennui*, of which Fénelon wrote so anxiously, moves them to very little interest; the utmost they seem able to say in their favour is this: "Women cannot foresee what may be the tastes of the individuals with whom they are to pass their lives. Their own tastes, therefore, should not be easily decided; they should, if possible, be so educated that they may attain any talent in perfection which they may desire, or which their circumstances may render necessary."†

This does not differ fundamentally from Rousseau's fallacy that a woman's sole function is "to please," and that by total acquiescence in another's views.

That all of us, men, women, children alike, whether we realise it or not, are, to some extent, influenced by our surroundings, our material environment; that the love of

<sup>\*</sup> *Essays on Education*, ch. xx.

† *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 182.

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beauty, rightly directed, is an element in morality, does not appear to occur to them: consequently they have no advice to offer about children's surroundings from that point of view: they do not plead for beauty in these, for the exclusion from them, so far as such a thing is possible, of all that is ugly and banale. As a necessary sequence there is no attempt to include the canons of Art in their Educational system.

An interesting example of the capacity of a first-rate mind to free itself from the effects of an imperfect or partly misdirected education may be found in a comparison of those pathetic pages in J. S. Mill's *Autobiography* when he writes of the dejection which overtook him in youth, with the pages of his Inaugural Address to the Students of St. Andrews where he discourses upon the function of Art, and the place of Beauty in the problem of human culture.

Mill's dejection was, as all his readers will recollect, charmed away by Wordsworth, who had—

" for weary feet, the gift of rest,"

who

" spoke, and loosed our heart in tears,  
He laid us as we lay at birth  
On the cool flowery lap of earth,  
Smiles broke from us and we had ease;  
The hills were round us, and the breeze  
Went o'er the sunlit fields again."

It is perfectly true that Mill was brought up in the Rationalist School and on its extremest principles; but there was another strand in him, and the older he grew the freer he waxed. Moreover, while Locke read the Classics as a gentleman should, and the Edgeworths lived and moved and had their being amidst a polite and conventionally brought up Society (one feels they should have

dwelt in Bath, not in Ireland with a two years' break in Clifton), Mill drank the spirit of the literatures of Greece and Rome into his very self.

After all, is it wonderful that the boy who began at the age of seven to read Plato's *Dialogues* in the original Greek, should in his early twenties be able to say: "The cultivation of the feelings became one of the cardinal points in my ethical and philosophical creed."

But though, as I have tried to show, Mill's view of education in many respects cut across Rationalism, yet since his influence has been far more marked in the region of economics and logic than in education, his variation has not worked its due effect; while the rationalism of Locke and the Edgeworths has held its ground, and can be seen to-day in its modern representative the "characterless bare soul" of Herbart, in the insistence by Herbart's followers and disciples, on sense as the ground of *all* knowledge. It can be seen too in the widespread preference for instruction rather than training. Not long ago during the discussion which followed a lecture on Education delivered to working men and women, a man rose and complained that the lecturer had spoken of the teacher exercising influence; and he added, "It is the teacher's business to *teach* my children, and I am not going to have anybody influencing them." It was crudely put, no doubt; but it represented the very general opinion that fact-imparting is education. It is, of course, in the latter as well as in the former that the teacher's legitimate influence should appear, though that particular man refused to admit the legitimacy of any influence but his own.

Even were the rationalist position true, and understanding were the only instrument of knowledge, still the reason would need training. But the rationalist over-insistence on instruction seems still more disastrous

to those who regard feeling as also an instrument of knowledge, who look on the sense of beauty as an essential factor of complete life. For if feeling is not to degenerate into emotionalism, nor the love of beauty into that sickly sentimentality which goes about with one daisy in its button-hole, it needs careful, experienced, and discriminating training.

The rationalist error lay in over-emphasising the sphere of reason ; yet we must remember that in restoring to their place feeling, the sense of beauty and the action of will, we may quite easily fall into a further error, by drawing the lines of demarcation too rigidly. For instance, the feelings and the sense of beauty cannot be trained apart from reason : the canons of beauty rest on reasonable experience : thus, the rule of Gothic Art that no ornament is to appear merely for the sake of ornament, is a tacit tribute to the reasonable fact that utility is an element in beauty, although unfortunately some useful things forget their duty to be beautiful.

Nor is beauty merely an appeal to the senses and the reason : it goes deeper to the feelings ; and this is perhaps the cause of the scanty attention paid to it by Locke, the Edgeworths, and the rationalists generally : they dread the incursion of anything which might affect that " dry light " they love so well.

And yet in the dawn of educational thought, in that book which, despite all the floods of ink spent since on fields of paper, has scarcely been superseded, there still remains the classic plea for the inclusion of beauty in the training of the young :—

" If our youth are to do their work in life, must they not make these graces and harmonies their perpetual aim ? . . .

" And all life is full of them, as well as every creative

and constructive art—painting, weaving, embroidery, the art of building, and the manufacture of vessels, as well as the frames of animals and of plants ; in all of them there is grace or the absence of grace. And absence of grace and inharmonious movement and discord are nearly allied to ill-words and ill-nature, as grace and harmony are the sisters of goodness and virtue, and bear their part. . . .

“ We would not have our guardians grow up amid images of moral deformity, as in some noxious pasture, and there browse and feed upon many a baneful herb and flower day by day, little by little, until they silently gather a festering mass of corruption in their own soul. Let our artists rather be those who are gifted to discern the true nature of beauty and grace ; then will our youth dwell in the land of health, amid fair sights and sounds ; and beauty, the effluence of fair works, will visit the eye and ear, like a healthful breeze from a purer region, and insensibly draw the soul even in childhood into harmony with the beauty of reason.” \*

When the reality and importance of that side of human life which is connected with the Feelings, with Love, with the Æsthetic sense are firmly established against the materialistic theory of the sense-origin of all knowledge, the next step will be to inquire into the proper method of training and developing these all-important factors of human life.

\* *The Republic* of Plato, iii. §§ 400, 401.



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